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The Week

IN ARRANGING a treaty with the Nationalist government of China restoring to that country complete tariff autonomy, Secretary Kellogg returns to the best traditions of American diplomacy. While other sore points remain, notably the question of extra-territoriality, the tariff treaty is a logical first step, and holds out the promise that the other injustices will be rectified in the not-distant future. The signing of the treaty, taken in conjunction with the Nanking settlement, constitutes *de facto* recognition and ends a ridiculous and embarrassing situation. The whole development means a great advance in good will between the two powers. This, no doubt, is one of the reasons for the hostility, verging on open anger, with which the news has been received in some other countries. Japan, in particular, is reported to be offended, both by the alleged suddenness of the new treaty and by the fact that the United States acted alone in such an important matter. But, in fact, this action had long been foreshadowed, and any other power which wished to do so could have joined the United States in it. There was certainly no reason for America to wait longer, in order to help Japan pull her Manchurian chestnuts out of the fire.

GREAT BRITAIN and France have come to an understanding in regard to naval competition. While Sir Austen Chamberlain refuses to make public the details, it is reported that each country is to notify the other of its building plans one year ahead, and that an agreement in principle has been reached which will make another race in building unlikely, particularly as regards the submarine. The new understanding is not an exclusive one, and it would be possible for other powers such as the United States to join. The details of the arrangement will be awaited with the deepest interest. The present world atmosphere is favorable to compacts of this character, thanks in part to the Kellogg proposal for the outlawry of war. While a change in the international temperature would quickly kill the tender young plant of confidence between the nations, it is well that every possible advantage should be taken of the opportunity. We hope that the new arrangement lives up to its advance notices, and will justify a renewal of the efforts for an Anglo-American naval agreement which failed at the Geneva conference.

THE desire of both political parties this year to have as little discussion as possible of outstanding problems is illustrated by the postponed dates of the acceptance speeches with which the campaign is formally opened. With the national conventions taking place at about the same time each four years, Mr. Hoover's speech will come twenty days later than did Mr. Harding's in 1920, and eleven days later than that of Mr. Hughes in 1916. In recent years only Mr. Coolidge has delayed his acceptance speech later than Mr. Hoover's, and then only by three days. Since he was already in the White House, and his speech the sheerest formality, the delay was less important than it is this year. Governor Smith's speech has been postponed partly in order to get a better radio hook-up, but to this cause can be attributed only forty-eight hours. He is being notified eleven days later than Mr. Davis

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and fifteen days later than Governor Cox. Mr. Wilson in 1916 delivered his speech eleven days later still, but, as in the case of Mr. Coolidge in 1924, he was already in the White House, and little importance could be attached to his pronouncement. The delays this year are clearly due to a desire on the part of the professionals who are grooming Messrs. Smith and Hoover to keep the campaign as short as possible. The less time people have in which to think, the fewer the embarrassing questions they can ask.

SENATOR SMOOT does not trust the Democrats on the tariff. They say they will be good, but on previous occasions they have belied fair declarations by actually revising duties downward. Senator Pittman indignantly denies that the Democrats will do anything to the sacred tariff, or will injure any business interest, little or big. But we respectfully point out to the Democratic campaign managers that they are still behind the Republicans in this matter. Senator Smoot plainly intimates that under Hoover there will be general tariff revision upward. The Democrats cannot win this game without promising to double the possible tariff bid of the Republicans. The logical conclusion is, of course, to take the coast guard off prohibition duty and use it for preventing any importations into the United States except of goods which we cannot possibly produce or find substitutes for. Only a dramatic stroke of this kind could win as much business favor for the Democrats as for the Republicans—if the way to win business favor is to promise all-round exclusion of foreign competition from the domestic market. We suggest that the Democratic party, in order to win the election, change its name to the Super-Republican party.

THE famous case of Oscar Slater has at last ended in his being set free, after serving eighteen and one-half years of a life sentence. Slater, our readers may remember, was found guilty of murder in Glasgow, Scotland, on circumstantial evidence of a flimsy sort. Through many years, a group of influential Englishmen, of whom Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was one, sought to get a rehearing of his case, and in this they were at last successful. The Scottish Court of Appeals has set aside the verdict on the ground of "misdirection in law" by the judge. It is expected that Slater will receive in partial compensation for his long period of unjust incarceration some ninety or a hundred thousand dollars, though nothing, of course, can fully compensate him for the terrible injustice he has experienced. It is impossible not to be reminded of the contrast between this case and that of Sacco and Vanzetti. Toward the end of that tragedy, a large number of persons appealed to Governor Fuller, urging that even though he felt convinced of the guilt of these men, he should commute their sentence to life imprisonment. It was pointed out that such punishment is the utmost which is legally possible in many states and in several foreign countries, for any crime; that it is regarded by many persons as a heavier punishment than death; above all, that it had the great advantage that if at some subsequent date evidence were discovered showing that Sacco and Vanzetti were innocent, it would still make partial restitution possible. Governor Fuller, however, had an arrogant confidence in his own rightness which was not shared by those who sat in judgment on Oscar Slater. He put his victims to death and thus ended all possibility of making atonement in case he should ever be proved to have been wrong.

AMERICA'S medieval policy in regard to collective bargaining, both industrially and legally, could hardly be better illustrated than by the recent events in New Bedford. A wage cut of 10 percent, which would certainly have been unnecessary under any kind of enlightened management, was decreed without consultation with the union. A unanimous strike followed. Opening the mills, after several months of attempting to starve out the workers, failed to induce them to return. Then, as is usual in such cases, the repressive forces of government were called into action by the employers. A judge was induced to issue an injunction against picketing, and to declare mass picketing illegal, although it had been practised in an entirely peaceable manner. Mass arrests followed, which enraged the strikers. When the jail cells were overfilled with pickets, a protesting crowd of strikers was met by a body of the national guard, called out to keep a peace which had not been broken except by the authorities themselves. The riot act was read to the strikers. If all these provocative measures do not cause serious violence, it will not be the fault of the officers of the law. Meanwhile the mills are idle, bitter feeling is being engendered, and nothing is being done to improve the bad industrial management which was, in the first place, responsible for the whole affair.

CRITICS of the newspaper who have pointed out the dangers of chain ownership, and the increasing development of the press as a big business enterprise, have usually been answered by the statement that competition is the salutary factor in the situation. It is argued that if one newspaper in a community misbehaves, suppressing or distorting news or displaying an unfair editorial attitude, its competitors can show it up and take away its readers and advertisers. For this theory to hold good, however, there must be at least two newspapers in a town; and in America this is no longer typically the case. Through consolidations and suspensions, the total number of papers is rapidly declining. Statistics collected by that invaluable journal of the journalistic trade, Editor and Publisher, show that of 1,351 cities large enough to support a daily, 937

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now have but one, and only 414 have two or more. This is true while total circulations are higher than ever before, nearly 39,000,000 a day. The number of morning papers has declined in eighteen months from 425 to 401. Evening papers have gone down from 1,576 to 1,531, and Sunday papers from 545 to 516. In the whole state of Michigan there are but five towns with more than one paper, and in Wisconsin but six. These decreases are now going on at a greatly accelerated pace, so that a year hence the comparisons will be even more striking.

THE economics of this movement is of course sound. One newspaper can produce almost the same revenue as three, and at not much more than one-third the cost. Advertisers are delighted to be able to reduce their appropriations and still cover the community. News and editorial matter now comes from press associations and syndicates and are so standardized that all papers are more or less identical; the loss to the city when a journal is extinguished is therefore not to be compared with that which would have followed the snuffing out of Marse Henry Watterson's Louisville Courier-Journal, or the old Springfield Republican. Yet the resulting situation is one which needs thinking about. If the citizens of these 937 one-paper towns don't like their paper, what are they to do? If the editor is without any sense of social obligation, or notoriously unfair, what recourse have they? Since the sacred deity of competition can no longer be invoked, it would seem that some sort of public control of journalism is more than ever desirable, even though it is now more than ever difficult to obtain.

THE United Mine Workers of America are attempting to retain what they can of their scattered forces and terrain by admitting defeat and withdrawing from battle. President Lewis has given up the objective for which he has stubbornly fought for so many months—retention of the Jacksonville scale. He has also given up the more basic policy, established by the union after many years of bitter struggle for it—settlement for the whole "Central Competitive Field." Districts are now allowed to settle separately. Indiana and Illinois are now in conference, and will probably come to an agreement on a wage cut. The Ohio operators refuse to confer, and their territory may become non-union. The miners' organization may lose not only this field, but most of the centrally important and hitherto organized territory in Pennsylvania. It faces the future with most of the fighting of half a century to do over again. The disorganization of the industry, plus the autocratic policy of many employers, has been the main cause of the result. Not to be ignored, however, is the bull-headed conservatism of the union administration, which in spite of ample warning refused to devote the necessary attention to remedying the basic industrial troubles.

TALKING MOVIES, the esthetic aspects of which are discussed by Mr. Gilbert Seldes elsewhere in this issue, have thrown the celluloid industry into profound agitation. Conceding that most of the audible films thus far made have been perfectly terrible, the movie magnates nevertheless fear that in future the silent variety, no matter how well made, will seem insipid by contrast. Everyone is frightened. The stars, most of whom are without stage experience and have never uttered a syllable in public, do not know whether they are fitted for the new tasks. Authors, scenario men and title writers see a completely new and far more difficult technique thrust upon them. Producers are worried because they must scrap equipment costing many millions and install new apparatus even more expensive. Theater owners are grumbling at the prospect of being required to put in costly wiring and pay heavy license fees. Exporters are wondering how a film with English dialogue can be sold in foreign countries which speak other languages; and if Spanish text, for example, is added after the picture has been made—which is technically feasible—how will the audience receive it when the actors' lips clearly do not speak the syllables which are heard? Another difficulty will come if new stars are brought forward in place of the present ones, some of whom have built up large followings abroad. Perhaps more alarmed than anyone else are the musicians, thousands of whom now earn their living playing in the film palaces, and see their livelihood endangered. The American Federation of Musicians has raised a large fund with which it hopes to fight the menace.

THE musicians are a well organized and powerful labor union, closely affiliated with the other theatrical trades, including the actors' organization. No doubt they could call a strike which would for at least a short period tie up the theaters of the country and cost the managers millions of dollars. They insist, however, that they are less concerned about the economic menace to themselves than about the future of Art. They feel that vaudeville is about to be dehumanized, and that the legitimate drama may go next. Assuming that these fears are genuine, they seem somewhat premature, not to say excessive. If the public does not like speaking movies, either in the form of short vaudeville sketches or feature films, it will demonstrate that fact by staying away from the cinemausoleums, and the managers will wreck their loudspeakers forthwith. If the public likes the speakies, all the musicians' plaints will in the long run prove as ineffective as has nearly every other fight of working men against labor-saving devices. Good music was once supposed to be endangered by the invention of the phonograph, the player-piano and the radio. It has survived all these perils; and while great economic hardship may be involved temporarily for the musician, there is no reason to suppose that

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it will not also survive the advent of the audible film.

THE first interim report of the "Mond Conference" in Great Britain between important employers and the unions, on the subject of coöperation for greater efficiency, may well startle those in the United States who had assumed that the aftermath of the general strike would be the equivalent of an American open-shop campaign. This report states, as the basis of everything else, that the unions should be recognized as "the appropriate and established machinery for the discussion and negotiation of all questions of working conditions," and that negotiations are facilitated if workers are members of their trade unions. The London Economist, commenting on this conclusion, says, "Every employer in this country knows that the trade unions have become an integral part of the life of the nation. The outlook and policy of the unions may be influenced by employers. They cannot be crushed by them. . . . The attitude of employers has shifted from the *opposition* of the nineteenth century, through the phase of *toleration* of the last twenty years, to that of *encouragement*." The conference concluded that the machinery for adjustment of labor disputes was more advanced in Great Britain than in any other country. We may add that all this will give Great Britain an immense competitive advantage over the United States, if coöperation for efficiency between unions and management becomes a real force.

THE Mond Conference goes on to recommend a National Industrial Council, somewhat similar to that outlined in the Liberal program entitled "Britain's Industrial Future." This council is to "hold regular meetings once a quarter for general consultation on the widest questions concerning industry and industrial progress." It is to establish a standing committee to appoint conciliation boards, and it is to set up machinery for continuous investigation into industrial problems. The National Council is to be made up equally of representatives of trade unions and employers' associations. This proposal has met with some criticism on the ground that the Council is to contain no representatives of the state or of consumers. But it constitutes a praiseworthy attempt of the chief parties engaged in industry so to organize that they can deal with their own major problems, and in so far as they accomplish their announced intention of increasing efficiency in production and minimizing industrial strife, neither the state nor the consumers will have much impulse to interfere. No such helpful instrument could be set up in this country, for the simple reason that labor, partly as a result of the opposition of employers, partly as a result of incidental difficulties, and partly as a result of the inertia of the union movement itself, is not sufficiently organized.

The Great God—Prosperity

A WASHINGTON news agency, in its forecast of Mr. Hoover's speech of acceptance, predicts that, so far from being a "startling document," it will be occupied largely in warning the American public that a change in administration will deal a black eye to business prosperity. This prediction scarcely needs to be reënforced by inside information. Mr. Hoover will doubtless sing a few other songs, but he is practically bound by the conditions in which he was nominated to give the most prominent place on his program to some variation of the old Republican symphony. He owes it to Mr. Coolidge to copy his chief in this respect, and he will doubtless discharge the obligation in full. As President, Mr. Hoover will not behave as Mr. Coolidge has behaved, but until he is elected and he can call his career his own, he will talk as Mr. Coolidge has talked. He is bound to claim for the Republicans a property right in prosperity which from their point of view cannot be challenged without shaking the foundations of the American universe.

This appropriation by the Republicans of the whole political credit of prosperity is one of the most equivocal, but one of the most effective, propagandist contraptions which the lop-sided brain of a governing class has ever invented. They claim a control over the mechanism of prosperity analogous to the control which the medieval Catholic Church claimed over the mechanism of salvation. Their government not only automatically grinds out prosperity, but any alternative government is by comparison certain to grind out privation. In part they are its exclusive custodians rather than merely its agents. In so far as prosperity exists, the way to perpetuate it is to vote for the Republican candidate. In so far as it may not exist, the way to summon it is still to vote for the Republican candidate. In their economic policy the Republicans can do no wrong. Should any hitch occur, the inconveniences are imposed by economic law, and they incur no responsibility for the suffering. Prosperity, from the Republican point of view, is not a measurable result. It is a prerogative which God has bestowed subject to certain limitations, upon the American people if they remain Republican.

Intrinsically absurd as this pretension is, the Republicans manage to a considerable extent to make it work. They represent the existing organization of American business in its political aspect, and American business, as now organized, works more confidently and smoothly with the Republicans in control of the government than it would with any other party in control. Any party which opposes the Republicans is either suspect to American business or becomes its creature. The existing flaws in prosperity are wrapped up in the existing organization of business, and they can be cured, if at all, only by subjecting business men to irksom

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discipline for the benefit of other classes. If the rule of another less friendly and trusted party is substituted for that of the Republicans, the new policy would, temporarily at least, dislocate business, slow production down and thus make for diminished prosperity. It is merely futile to substitute for the Republicans a party like the Democracy of today, which is a willing but less confidential servant of the existing organization of business, and it is impossible to substitute for them a more radical party which would like to reform American business economy even at some temporary sacrifice of prosperity. The Republican party has either neutralized or disqualified its opponents.

As long as the American public identifies social well-being with the volume of business and the percentage of profits, the rule of the Republicans will not be effectively challenged. Conceivably some particular Democratic candidate, such as Al Smith, by taking advantage of popular restlessness and political boredom, can elect himself to the presidency, but, if elected, he would be in essential respects no less Republican than the Republicans. He would have to pay for his election by behaving as Al Smith is now behaving. He, too, would bow obsequiously to the God Prosperity and would call for the consecration of the privileges upon which business prosperity, contrasted with general social well-being, depends. If he proved unruly after he was elected, and tampered with these privileges, he would be placarded at the next election as a wilful fellow who had raised an impious hand against the great god. There is, so far as we can see, no reason why the Republicans should not continue to control the mechanism of American secular salvation until economic discontent becomes a much more positive and permanent fact in American life than it now is. They are confronted at present with little conscious class opposition. Almost all politically effective Americans worship success in the person of men like Mr. Raskob, and they will continue to do so until there is less success to pass around.

The danger for the Republicans is that, when there is less success to pass around, they may be unable to liberalize their policy to meet the need for social reorganization. Prosperity in its social aspect is the measurable and modifiable result of a group of processes. It cannot be apotheosized without being placed eventually on a precarious pedestal. As soon as the conflict between the prosperity of the few and the welfare of the many becomes more conspicuous, Republican policy will have to move in one of two directions. Its authors may have the good sense to admit that prosperity for the mass of the American people is not the automatic result of the existing organization of business, but has to be artfully contrived and paid for by imposing on business an increasing number of social charges. Or, what is more likely, they may refuse to modify the organization of business in the interest of a more widely distributed prosperity, and they may try to prevent the resulting economic discontent from impairing their potential power by intrenching themselves behind the Supreme Court and associating law and order with a narrow, rigid interpretation of the Constitution. Although they are more likely to pursue the second of these courses than the first, it is not certain. The engineer and the executive are coming to exercise more control than the proprietor over modern industry, and the engineer is, in the long run, bound to measure the value of any process by the appraisal of all its results rather than by its fulfillment of a conclusion. Herbert Hoover provides a relatively hopeful prospect among the blind alleys of Republicanism, precisely because he unites engineering standards with a human outlook. If he introduces into Republican policy the beginnings of a technical conscience, he may, by his example, if not by his precept, expose the frivolity of the existing worship of the God Prosperity.

The contradictory ingredients in the worship of Prosperity will in the end prove to be its undoing. The Republicans are claiming the benefit of both sides of an exclusive choice. In the long run they will have to select one or the other. They now defend the Republican system as the embodiment of a wise economic individualism which achieves prosperity by enabling business interests to achieve it for themselves, and which objects to interference from government with admitted evils on the score of its probable futility and its tendency to undermine individual initiative. But this defense does not correspond to the facts. They use the powers of the government frankly to encourage business activity, and they should, consequently, watch the result of their discrimination in favor of one economic class in order to protect, if necessary, other economic classes from exploitation. Instead, however, of letting business alone, they encourage it by a protective tariff and other discriminations in its favor, and then balk at assuming any express responsibility for the effect of their policy on the welfare of the other classes. Their combination of economic philosophy and practice is an impossible hybrid with the head and shoulders of a lion and the hind quarters of a cow. They have succeeded in getting the American people to swallow the bait and ignore the hook, because so far they have not had to deal with the serious economic discontent of more than one class or section at a time, but they cannot continue to succeed. When the American economic organism slows down and the problem of distribution increases in importance as compared to the problem of production, they will have to diminish the privileges of business or volunteer an increase of its responsibilities. It is the second of these alternatives which eventually they will have to adopt. American patriots who understand the importance which the American people attach to this worship of prosperity can only hope that the Republicans will adopt it before it is too late.

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Paying for Wall Street's Joy Ride

THOSE who watch closely the financial structure in the United States are now asking more and more apprehensively, What will happen to credit and interest rates in the fall? Decrease in the reserve of the Reserve Banks, accompanied by the expansion of their loans, has brought the reserve ratio to the lowest point in seven years. During the last fiscal year (ending on June 30) the redistribution of gold from our coffers to other nations reduced the gold stock $580,000,000, while the reserve bank credit outstanding grew $520,000,000. A contraction or expansion of reserve bank credit may contract or expand the volume of member bank credit by about thirteen times. Between the end of July and the high point of autumn, a large growth of bank loans for movement of the crops and more active industrial production normally takes place. As a result of this expansion, the rediscounts of the Reserve Banks rose $123,000,000 in 1923, $200,000,000 in 1925, and $160,000,000 in 1926. And in spite of the fact that in all these years gold was flowing into our reserves in large quantities instead of flowing out, the reserve ratio fell about 6 percent during the summer and fall. Will there not be a larger drop this year? If so, will not this necessitate still higher rediscount rates, with their train of higher rates for commercial loans, constriction of credit, and an alarmingly restrictive effect upon general trade and industrial production?

The possibility of such a result is what Federal Reserve policy has been fearing for many months, and has been actively attempting to guard against for at least the past half-year. The banking authorities have, of course, been concentrating their attention upon the generally observed fact that the huge expansion of credit which has occurred has not been due to enlarged borrowings by business for regular business purposes, but to the borrowings of speculators and investors in the stock market. Loans to brokers increased from $2,500,000,000 in June, 1926, to $3,115,000,000 in June, 1927, and soared from that point to $4,560,000,000 at the peak of June 13, 1928. This increase of over $2,000,000,000 in speculators' borrowings has been simultaneous with the startling rise in stock-market values, and has been its principal contributory cause. This is not to say that the brokers' loans forced the market up. Rather, the persons who wanted to buy and hold stocks for the rise called into existence the credit, without which their operations would have been severely curtailed. The efforts of the Reserve authorities to reduce this form of loans has not been due to any particular interest in the price of stocks, or any desire to curb speculation as such. Rather, it has arisen from the fear that with so much credit tied up in speculation, and with so much gold leaving the country, loans at sufficiently low rates would not be available for the legitimate interests of industry when business should require them.

Nevertheless, the efforts of the Reserve Banks to restrict the use of credit for speculation have not been strikingly successful. In spite of two increases in the rediscount rate, brokers' loans fell only about $400,000,000, from June 6 to June 27, and then increased again. But even this minor decrease did not have an equivalent effect in lightening the strain on credit, for when the banks called the loans to brokers, the customers of the brokers in great numbers turned about and borrowed from the banks on the security of the stocks they were holding. Thus the fear which the authorities have been feeling is beginning to take more definite shape in the contemplation of the probable situation in September and October, 1928.

There is a distinctly new and complicating factor in this situation. A large percentage of the loans to brokers—at present about $1,800,000,000, or over 40 percent of the total—is not derived from the resources of the banks themselves, but is loaned on the accounts of those described in the bank literature as "others," who are chiefly corporations with large cash balances which they cannot use to better advantage than to place on call. The increase in loans to brokers by these "others" amounts to about $900,000,000 during the past year. Unless business urgently requires this money, or could use it in business operations to make larger profits than the call rate offers, it is not likely to be withdrawn. Every tightening of brokers' credit by the banks tends, at least under existing conditions, to buoy up the call rate and so attract outside money. This money, meanwhile, helps to sustain stock-market values, and as long as they remain high, it is difficult for the banks to reduce their own loans on securities very much.

There remains the possibility that the autumn demand for credit by trade and industry will be met mainly by the withdrawal of these very business funds from the call money market, rather than by borrowings from banks. It must not be assumed that this process is possible. In order to render it possible, the same concerns which are now lending money to brokers would have to be the principal ones which needed credit in September and October. That may not be the case, in which event the firms which had idle cash would be likely to keep it where it could earn the call rates, rather than depositing it at the low interest which banks pay on drawing accounts, and so making it available for other borrowers.

Any considerable withdrawal of corporate loans from Wall Street would, however, precipitate a drastic rise in the call rate and a further fall in stocks. The demand for call money is not very elastic; it does not readily fluctuate up and down as funds are lent or withdrawn. When, at the begin-

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ning of July, corporations withdrew about $75,000,000 from the market temporarily to meet dividend requirements, the call rate rose for a day from 6 to 10 percent. It fell again because the money quickly found its way back to investment channels. But an equivalent withdrawal of such funds for the uses of trade would not drift back so easily.

Unless some unexpected resources of credit are tapped, therefore, or unless the Federal Reserve authorities are content to allow the reserve ratio to sink for a considerable time to a still more dangerously low level, we are likely to find, this fall, either that business is hampered by tight credit or that the stock market suffers a dramatic collapse. Perhaps both things will happen to a degree. In view of the fact that these events would occur immediately before the election, we may expect the politicians to try to make capital out of them. Doubtless the Republicans would allege that they resulted from lack of confidence due to a fear that the Democrats might win the election. As a matter of fact, however, the Republican administration is not without a large share of blame for the train of events leading up to this untoward conclusion.

What has caused this use of so much of the surplus capital of the nation in speculation rather than in production of goods and employment of labor? The chief activating cause has been, of course, the widespread belief that stock values would continue to rise almost indefinitely, to unprecedented heights. This has created the demand for the brokers' loans, and has made lending money on call unusually profitable. Big operators for the rise have as always done their utmost to foster this impression. But their efforts have been ably reinforced by the constant statements from Mr. Coolidge, Mr. Mellon and Mr. Hoover lauding the great prosperity of the United States and predicting its uninterrupted increase. These statements have been made with unusual frequency during the past half-year, and have been issued at critical moments, when the public began to worry about unemployment or some other rift in the lute, and stocks have threatened to sag. They have been accompanied by similar statements from large business executives like Mr. Schwab and—it must be added—Mr. Raskob of Al Smith's *entourage*. But nobody else has equalled the performance in this matter of President Coolidge, who, at the time last winter when the stock market seemed about to come under control and the Federal Reserve authorities were doing their utmost to restrict the increase of brokers' loans, told the Associated Press correspondent that he saw no danger in the growth of this type of credit.

While stimulating the demand for loans in this way, the administration also helped to supply the demand by rapid retirement of the public debt, which released capital to the money market in great quantities. The policy of retiring the debt rapidly is highly praiseworthy from the point of view of governmental finance, but in the temporary situation of the money market it might have been pursued with more moderation. It is true, as the July Federal Reserve Bulletin points out, that this money is collected from taxpayers, mainly large ones, who might use the money in much the same way if the government did not collect and distribute it. But this defense overlooks the possibility that the government might have collected the money—or even more money from large taxpayers—and used a larger part of it for valuable public improvements and other productive purposes, rather than paying it out to be loaned in Wall Street. Any government which followed the advice of the experts on unemployment would certainly have devoted its surplus funds to construction during the past few months, rather than releasing them for speculation.

And there remains the still more basic question why large corporations had so much idle money which they could not employ so profitably in production as in lending to speculators. Have profit margins of leading corporations been too large in the recent past? May it not be that a number of our semi-monopolistic industries, having made great economies in production cost, have not passed on these economies to workers and consumers sufficiently so that they could sell all they could make? May not this situation have caused idle capital at one end of the scale and idle labor at the other? Such a reflection is damaging indeed to the Republican view that a fundamentally sound and perpetual prosperity exists, and that it can be produced and maintained merely by raising tariffs and letting monopoly pursue its own sweet course.

We doubt if the Democrats have any better understanding of this situation than the Republicans, or are any better prepared to work out basic improvements in it. They seem to be trying to prove that in relation to finance and industry they are as Republican as the Republicans themselves. Nevertheless, if these troubles do come upon us, we hope the Democrats will be forced to attempt to prove that the fault lies, not in a fear of their own ineptitude, but rather in a fatuous complacency, exemplified to its highest degree in the present administration, concerning the operation of our economic institutions.

A Friendly Hand for Mexico

WHILE the political situation in Mexico City which the assassination of Obregon brought about remains in certain respects obscure and threatening, the recent news looks, on the whole, in the direction of a peaceable and orderly escape. Mexico is now ruled by a powerful party of nationalists who have come into power as the result of the Revolution, and who are determined to prevent counter-revolution on the one hand and foreign interference on the other. But this nationalist party is divided into a labor and an agrarian faction

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which are competing for the control of the policy of the government, and during the administration of Calles the labor faction has, through the aggressive and able Secretary of Labor Morones, exercised a disproportionate amount of power. The agrarians expected Obregon to redress this balance, but his death frustrated their hopes. As the result of it they flared up, forced Morones and his aids out of the government, and talked for a while wild. Now, however, they seem to be calming down. There is a good chance that they will find a successor to Obregon whom they can elect and who will do for the agricultural interest what they hoped and expected Obregon would do.

The immediate future of Mexico depends chiefly upon the preservation of two conditions. It is essential, in the first place, that the several factions in the nationalist party, which is governing the country in the name of the Revolution, should stick together and not allow their differences to develop into a violent quarrel. There is always danger of such a quarrel, for the party dictatorship which now prevails is not a stable and an orderly form of government. It rests on violence and tends to provoke violence. But the Mexican revolutionary party has managed to hang together for seven or eight years under several trying crises, and it is, we suppose, likely to hang together a longer time with the agrarians on top than with labor. The cultivation of the land is a more important branch of economic activity in Mexico than is industry. The future prosperity of Mexico depends chiefly upon the development of a more prosperous and a more educated class of Indian herders and farmers. They seem on the whole to be loyal to the Revolution, and to be willing to fight in opposition to counter-revolution, but whether they can acquire enough skill as farmers and enough national consciousness to qualify as the mainstay of the revolutionary government remains to be proved. Their political future will depend very largely on the patriotism and good sense of their leaders.

The other condition upon which the future of Mexico depends is preservation of an understanding and friendly attitude by the government of the United States toward the behavior of its neighbor. Mexico needs from the United States not merely patience, tolerance and the refusal to interfere with the domestic affairs or to ruffle the susceptibilities of the Mexican people, but an attitude of active friendliness. Mr. Dwight Morrow has already given an impressive illustration of what a wise and well disposed ambassador can do, not merely to promote good relations between the two governments and the two peoples, but to help Mexicans to solve their own problems and so diminish the probability of future friction and disorder. Obregon's assassination has unfortunately interrupted Mr. Morrow's work of economic and religious reconciliation, but it may be resumed, and no doubt it will be resumed just as soon as the Mexicans settle on the successor of Calles to the presidency, and regain a sense of security and confidence.

As it happens, however, the successor to the President of the United States is also a matter of some doubt. At present no one knows whether, after the fourth of March next, the new occupant of the White House may not supersede Mr. Morrow by a very much less able, disinterested and benevolent ambassador. In these circumstances it would be most reassuring to the Mexicans and most grateful to liberal public opinion in this country, if the Republican and Democratic candidates for the presidency should in their speeches of acceptance call attention to Mr. Morrow's mission to Mexico City and encourage him to carry it on. There is, of course, no reason why Mr. Hoover should not pay this tribute to Mr. Morrow. The Ambassador is a Republican, and by expressly endorsing his attitude toward Mexico Mr. Hoover would be patting Mr. Coolidge on the back. It would be less easy and obvious for Governor Smith to do something of the kind, but it would be the more creditable if he showed the good sense to do it, and thus helped to reassure the staggering Mexican government and purchased at a cheap price a great deal of progressive support. As far as foreign policy is concerned, there is only one question on which a progressive might fear that Governor Smith's Catholicism would embarrass his political judgment, and that is in relation to Mexico. They might also feel dubious about the attitude toward Mexico of Governor Smith's Catholic campaign manager, who in the event of a victory would presumably occupy an important position in the Cabinet and in the new President's counsels. Governor Smith can disarm these fears at once and until the end of the campaign by expressing unequivocally his approval of the aims and the achievements of Mr. Dwight Morrow in Mexico. He could even with positive advantage to himself offer to keep him as ambassador for the purpose of completing the work which has been so ably and auspiciously begun.

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HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN GEORGE SOULE
EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG R. M. LOVETT

ASSISTANT EDITOR: T. S. MATTHEWS

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN ROBERT LITTELL
LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL
LEO WOLMAN ELINOR WYLIE

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Blindfolded You Know the Difference

THE above words blare out from a great illuminated board on the top of a building at Times Square, advertising Old Gold cigarettes. Also, if I do not mistake me, they have appeared from time to time in all the better magazines and newspapers. This cigarette, which was once known as Beechnut, and latterly has thrown such confusion into the camp of the Smith Brothers, has indeed distinguished itself by the brilliance of its national advertising, and the astonishing audacity by which it has captured a considerable section of a market held to be saturated. Tens of thousands of smokers, under the shock of this assault, have turned from their sometime favorites, and now swear by Old Golds—their mildness, their mellowness, their richness, their coughlessness. And that their judgment is sound, and seconded in the highest quarters, the following signed statement (with 10 by 8-inch photograph) bears witness:

BLINDFOLDED

IN SCIENTIFIC TEST OF LEADING CIGARETTES

MRS. MORGAN BELMONT

SELECTS OLD GOLD.

"In my travels here and abroad, I have often wished that I might find a cigarette of pleasing flavor which would not rasp my throat or bite my tongue. The blindfolded test has proved to me that I need seek no further. The pleasant, smooth cigarette I named as my choice turned out to be Old Gold. No wonder so many of my friends prefer this brand. I, too, find Old Gold the most delightful cigarette of all.—Mrs. Morgan Belmont."

Nor is the reason for this happy consummation far to seek:

"In case after case, where the leading cigarettes have been compared by blindfolded smokers, Old Gold has been selected as the most appealing cigarette. Because they're made from the heart leaves of the tobacco plant. That's why you can pick them even in the dark."

But can you? Yes! will cry a hundred thousand smokers with the utmost confidence. Pick my favorite brand, blindfolded, in the dark, upside down, of course I can!

Yet the chances are that a careful test of all the smokers in the country as to their Old Gold or any other complex would show that they could pick their winner just once in every nine times it was presented to them. The mathematical chance of recognizing their favorite among the others on the market works out to just 11.6 percent—instead of the 100 percent they so confidently assert.

This figure was arrived at by a series of exhaustive tests carried on in the psychological department of Reed College, Portland, Oregon. The work was done under the direction of Mr. Louis Goodman, as a thesis requirement, and the results, in the form of a 160-page typewritten document, lie before me, complete with case histories of the subjects who volunteered for the tests, and endless statistical tables of correlations and probabilities. A most imposing document, that sheds light not only on cigarettes, but upon the whole phenomenon of buying commodities by brands and advertising appeal. Our eyes can be readily trained to recognize the package, but our taste-buds, our noses, our fingers—aye, and in many cases our stomachs, our lights and our livers—seem to be a stupider lot. Unaided, they appear totally unable to recognize the heart leaves of the tobacco plant, or the essence of a good many other things.

More than twenty students were tested by Mr. Goodman, covering a period of two months. All were seasoned smokers (of at least two years' standing); all volunteered to submit to the tests with the utmost confidence in their ability to select their favorite brands.

Here is M. P., a typical subject. He has smoked steadily for five years at an average of 120 cigarettes a week. He names twenty-one brands, both domestic and foreign, to which he is accustomed. His favorite is Lucky Strike; he inhales all forms of tobacco; he is much given to conversation about pipes and smoking mixtures; other things being equal he likes them strong; "all of the subject's certainty degrees at the start were very high." Obviously no suckling.

The testing procedure was very carefully worked out, and included blindfolds, smoking with and without holders, frequent rest periods, black unsweetened coffee to destroy taste sensations between presentations, and all manner of safeguards and precautions. Methodology alone claims twenty-seven pages of the manuscript. The primary purposes of the experiments were two:

First, to determine the ability of smokers to discriminate between cigarettes on the basis of olfactory and gustatory cues.

Second, to discover whether there is any meaningful correlation between feelings of certainty and the correctness of the reports given by the subjects of the experiment.

Specifically the tests concerned themselves with the recognition of brands when all visual cues were taken away; with the ability of smokers to differentiate between two separate brands; with the consistency of "like" and "dislike" reactions when a series repeating several brands was presented; with

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the ability to recognize strong as against mild cigarettes; with the ability to differentiate between straight (not blended) Turkish and domestic tobaccos.

The results of the experiments are summarized in the report as follows:

1. The subjects could not recognize brands on the basis of gustatory and olfactory cues.
2. The subjects, when deprived of only visual cues, could not name brands correctly.
3. The subjects could not differentiate between two cigarettes (specified as "No. 1" and "No. 2") *even when smoking without holders or blindfolds.*
4. The subjects could not give consistent answers of "like" and "dislike" for their favorite brands or any others. (Thus in a series, a subject would say "like" to a Lucky Strike when it was first presented, "dislike" on the second presentation, "indifferent" on the third.)
5. The subjects could not recognize their favorite brands.
6. The subjects could not differentiate between what they called strong and mild cigarettes.
7. The subjects, as a group, could not differentiate between straight Turkish and domestic tobaccos. (But a few performed well enough to warrant further experimentation on this point.)
8. There was no significant plus correlation between the subjects' accuracy and their certainty that they were right in naming brands, strength or kind of tobacco.
9. The subjects consistently did less well than they would have done on a probability (guesswork) basis, indicating dependence on extraneous cues furnished by the experimenter's technique, rather than use of objective ones offered by the tobacco itself.

Scanning the tables at random, we note the score of five subjects tested blindfolded with Old Golds:

Subject	*Times Presented*	*Times Correctly Named*
M. P.	11	0
H. G.	9	0
N. D.	7	1
A. N.	10	1
D. N.	7	0
TOTAL	44	2

In forty-four presentations, Mrs. Belmont's favorite cough cure was but twice correctly named. Rather it was called:

Camel	13 times
Lucky Strike	10 "
Fatima	7 "
Chesterfield	5 "
Stroller	4 "
Three Castles	1 "
Tareyton	1 "
One Eleven	1 "
TOTAL ERRORS	42

On the basis of pure chance, at least seven answers out of forty-four should have been correct, but the smokers were all so sublimely sure of themselves that they did consistently worse than chance. Not until all the tests were over and recorded were they disillusioned.

With that disillusionment came some sad reflections. One of the men had been buying Fatimas for years, paying the few cents more for "that whale of a difference." It was conclusively proved to him that blindfolded he could not distinguish Fatimas from Strollers—at half the price. Another claimed that Tareyton and Piedmont were the only two "sweet" brands; he always knew them. Yet blindfolded, he triumphantly named the two when he was actually smoking, first, a Fatima, and, second, a Chesterfield. Another, while smoking a Camel, which he had named a Lucky Strike, said that Luckies never hurt his throat, but "go down easy and smooth," whereas Camels are "terrible and stick in one's throat." Another, having been presented with Fatimas (one of his favorites) twice, and having missed both times, while smoking a third wanted to bet the experimenter, and give him odds to boot, that he had not yet been tendered a Fatima. Another, when his favorite, Three Castles, was presented straight through a couplet test, called it first Old Gold, and then Marlboro, and claimed that the former was strong and the latter mild—when he was smoking the same package of Three Castles all the time.

Experiment was specifically made to test the Old Gold advertisements, following the same technique as described in the copy. To make the case more conclusive, "during the supplementary tests which were devised to duplicate the Old Gold tests of newspaper fame, even the blindfold was dispensed with. This, of course, provided the subjects with countless visual cues, and duplicated normal smoking conditions almost to the letter. The cigarettes were presented so that the label was underneath and at the proximal end. The subject was closely observed and distracted so that he would not look at the label, or even see it fortuitously."

When the results were calculated they showed "a complete refutation of the Old Gold advertisements. The subjects not only give adverse reports as to the agreeableness of their favorite, and wrong reports as to its strength, but do likewise for all brands of popular blended cigarettes."

The quantitative conclusions summarizing all tests indicate:

Test	*Result on Basis of Pure Chance*	*Actual Performance*
Recognition of Brands	17.6%	15.7%
" " Favorite	17.6	11.6
" " Strong	38.3	28.8
" " Mild	63.7	57.9
Correlation between "like" and "dislike."	40.0	30.8

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In respect to the latter figure, if the group had all said "like" to the same brand every time it was presented, the actual performance would, of course, have been 100 percent.

In brief, despite the flaring signs, the confessions of great athletes, and Mrs. Morgan Belmont, "the only way to recognize a cigarette is to look at the label." And it is more than probable that if equally careful tests were made of all manner of other nationally advertised commodities, the same sort of figures would be forthcoming. With no sight of the package or its contents, how accurate or consistent would we be in recognizing or "liking" perfumes, dentifrices, puffed cereals, coffees, teas, candies, patent medicines, ginger ales, canned goods? How much better does a drink taste because we believe, however innocently, in the prewar label?

Increasingly we buy with our eyes, and those that can assault the vision most arrestingly get the order. What sells a motor car today is not the engine, but the package. This all adds to the romance of commerce, but it adds nothing at all either to the intelligence or the bank account of the wayfaring consumer.

STUART CHASE.

Hoover or Smith?

II. *Will the Solid South Be Broken?*

IN A previous article, I showed that if each state were to vote in 1928 as it has done in at least two of the three previous elections, Hoover would get 382 electoral votes, or 116 more than he needs to win, with Smith receiving only 149. The latter therefore needs, from some source, 117 other votes if he is to be victorious. Before we ask where he might get these, it may be well to consider whether there is any danger that he cannot carry the Solid South.

In past elections, there has not been the slightest question that the Democratic candidate would win these ten states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia, with their 114 electoral votes. There is some significance, therefore, in the fact that this year the Republicans are openly claiming they may win some of this sacred Southern soil. Even more outspoken than they are the Southern clergymen who have taken up arms against Smith and predict that the prohibition issue will result in his defeat. Is there any basis for these opinions?

It is quite true, certainly, that not in a generation has the South had a candidate whom it so much disliked. Not one of the outstanding facts about him fits the ideas of that region. He is a Tammany man, and the South hates Tammany. He is a Catholic, and the South is the home of that narrow Protestantism which built the Ku Klux Klan, and has as its main tenet fear and distrust of Rome. He stands for urbanism and the recent immigrant, while the South, despite its increasing industrialism, is still dominated by a rural psychology, and is the home of the purest old Anglo-Saxon strain to be found anywhere in this country. He is an avowed wet, and whatever the Southerner's personal habits may be, he is politically dry—to keep liquor from the Negroes, if for no other reason. The South is addicted to states' rights, or thinks it is, and no matter what the Smith supporters may say for campaign purposes, he is actually a pragmatic federalist, willing to accept whatever basis for national activities seems desirable in any given case. If you hunted the country over, you could hardly find a man better qualified, in theory, to be the object of the South's dislike.

That being the case, it is appropriate to ask why the region accepted him at Houston? The answer is, of course, that it didn't. The Southern politicians accepted Smith. They did so because they saw that there was no one else in the party who had any chance of winning—and in the long run politicians must win. It is a business matter with them: unless they can get control of patronage and distribute jobs, they cannot indefinitely keep their followers in line. But the rank and file of the Democratic party in the South are under no such pressure, and this is particularly true of the women. They are not bound by the decision at Houston; they might decide to stay away from the polls as a protest against the selection of Smith, or they might even conceivably decide to vote for Hoover.

It should perhaps be pointed out here that the tales of returned travelers, who have "gone all over the South and found the whole region solid for Smith" are of just as little value in forecasting the result as are the reports of those other travelers who have found the West supporting Hoover to the last embattled voter. Travelers usually talk with politicians or with people who have themselves talked with politicians, and all these opinions are therefore based finally on the mere repetition of wishful thinking. Such statements made in previous campaigns have repeatedly been found to be without foundation in fact. They may be correct in this case; but it is equally possible that they may be wrong.

An important fact regarding the South has been pointed out by every commentator who has discussed that region in recent years. Through the development of textile mills in North Carolina,

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hydro-electric power in Alabama, iron and steel at Birmingham, the South is rapidly becoming industrialized, is on its way to be a second New England. The psychological shift in this direction is now being helped by the presence in the South, either in the winters or all the year round, of hundreds of thousands of Northerners, including many wealthy, retired manufacturers and other business men from industrial states.

Probably most persons who have not looked into the subject have an idea that the Republican vote in the Solid South is entirely negligible; and if so, a recapitulation of that vote in the last election, 1924, will surprise them. The following table shows the total Republican, Democratic and La Follette vote in these ten states and the percentages which the Republican vote bore to the total:

POPULAR VOTE IN THE "SOLID SOUTH," 1924

State	*Republican*	*Democratic*	*La Follette*	*Republican is % of Total*
Alabama	45,005	112,966	8,084	27
Arkansas	40,564	84,795	13,173	29
Florida	30,633	62,083	8,625	32
Georgia	30,300	123,200	12,691	18
Louisiana	24,670	93,218	4,063	20
Mississippi	8,546	100,475	3,494	7.5
North Carolina	191,753	284,270	6,651	39
South Carolina	1,123	49,008	620	2.2
Texas	130,023	484,605	42,881	19
Virginia	73,359	139,797	10,379	32

Thus it will be seen that a change of 12 percent of the votes would have put North Carolina in the Republican column. A change of 19 percent would have done the same for Florida and Virginia, 22 percent for Arkansas and 24 percent for Alabama.

Moreover, the 1924 vote for La Follette would seem to have come from the Republicans in the South rather than the Democrats. Mr. Coolidge's vote in every state except Texas was substantially smaller than was Mr. Harding's in 1920, a fact which is also accounted for in part by the generally lighter vote in 1924. These differences ranged from 1,100 and 3,000 in South Carolina and Mississippi to 29,000 and 41,000 in Alabama and North Carolina.

One of the puzzling factors in the election this year is, of course, the part which Al Smith's Catholicism will play. It is certainly not true that all Protestants and Catholics will vote according to their religious affiliation, ignoring party lines; it is equally untrue that the question will play no part in the election. The truth lies somewhere between these two statements, and no one knows just where.

If the Catholic issue were the deciding element, Smith would certainly lose the Solid South. In no state there, except Louisiana, are his co-religionists more than a small minority. How small, is revealed by this table, giving the Census Bureau's estimate of the proportion which Catholic church members bear to the total population in each state. (The church membership of course includes some minors, and the figures for the total population, all minors. There are no reliable statistics giving the relationship between Catholic voters and all others.)

STATE	PERCENTAGE OF CATHOLICS
Alabama	01
Arkansas	01
Florida	03
Georgia	00.6
Louisiana	39
Mississippi	02
North Carolina	00.2
South Carolina	00.6
Texas	09
Virginia	02

The facts which we have noted about the Solid South apply with equal or greater force to the border states, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Kentucky. In the first two of these the Republicans polled 43 percent of the total in 1924, which means, of course, that a shift of 8 percent would have given them a victory, such as they had in 1920. In Kentucky they polled 49 percent of the vote, which was a plurality over the Democrats and La Follette forces, and carried the state. In none of the three states is the Catholic population higher than 6 percent.

In some parts of the North, there is evidence of a drift away from prohibition since 1920, and such a development is, of course, considered favorable to Governor Smith's chances. Is there any such trend in the South? If it exists, there is no statistical evidence of it. No referenda have been held in that region like those in California, Colorado, Illinois, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New York and Wisconsin. A point worth remembering is that every Southern state, except Louisiana, had already gone dry by state-wide legislation, before national prohibition came into effect. The same thing is true of Oklahoma, Tennessee and Kentucky.

It will be conceded, I think, that the foregoing facts do not show conclusively that Smith will fail to carry any state in the Solid South. They do show, however, that he will have a harder fight to retain the 114 votes of this region than has any other Democratic candidate within memory. But the real battleground will be the industrial states of the Northeast and Middle West which normally go Republican in presidential years. What are his chances in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Illinois? How will these states be affected by his Catholicism, his wetness? These questions will be considered in another article.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

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The Voice of the Bank

A FEW weeks ago a research scientist was coming to the end of a fast run from Chicago to New York. He was a globe-trotter and a good fellow, and he has what Henry James used to call "connections." One of these, a well known banker, was sitting with him in the observation car. Talk had flowed naturally to the presidential nominations. All bars were down. The scientist ventured a guess; but the banker knew. "Coolidge is going to be nominated," he said. "How do I know? Because we men who pay the bills want him; and we get what we want."

That remark, circumspectly but reliably quoted, made me read the July "Letter" from the National City Bank more closely than usual. I wondered whether the official voice of The Bank would sound like the unofficial speech of a banker. One was direct, and the other came as through a microphone, statically, but the pitch was very much the same, though the tone was different.

Starting with a review of general business conditions, the "Letter" states that the first half of 1928 has not been markedly good or bad. The steel output has increased, but both kinds of pig, ferrous and porcine, have fallen off. Copper has been "the most satisfactory performer," while tin, "the most sensitive of commodities," is pining away from a slow attack of non-consumption. The total volume of business is below that of the first half of 1927, there has been a heavy slump in stocks and bonds, all crops have suffered from a bad spring, neither manufacturers, investors nor farmers should be downcast, and the farmer, above all, should be patient and reasonable. "The economic laws work ultimately for equality."

In the course of the information it is pleasant to note that "Rising prices for raw cotton . . . is now aiding the movement of goods," that "a decline of 2,067,000 barrels in gasoline stocks . . . have been even more significant," and that "about 20 percent less coal is now needed . . . as before the War."

Most of the fifteen-page bulletin is given to the recital and interpretation of financial events. One-third is devoted to the Political Campaign and the Farm Problem, the latter at some length. The approach to the agricultural situation is made in terms of a tribute to the eloquence of Senator Borah in his speech on the equalization fee before the Committee on Resolutions at the Republican Convention. In a quoted passage the Senator declares that there are two objections to the provision: the first, that it cannot be done, and second, that it ought not to be, even if it could, because it would call on the farmer to surrender his initiative. The passage concludes: "In my opinion, friends, the greatest benefit and the greatest favor which has been rendered to the American farmer in his economic independence was when Calvin Coolidge vetoed this bill. And the time will come when the American farmer will recognize the courage and the statesmanship of the man who vetoed the plan to make him a bureaucratic rat."

The Senator is ambiguous as to whether it was Mr. Coolidge or the farmer that Messrs. McNary and Haugen were conspiring to rat-ify; but the author of the "Letter," without settling this doubt, asserts that the Borah argument "is based on the fundamental principle that individual liberty is too precious to be sacrificed for anything else." This is an interesting resort to the historic but perilous doctrine of Natural Rights. No further allusion is made to it, but the author, with perhaps finer ingenuity then he is aware of, proceeds in perfect consistency with the American version of the doctrine, as he turns from the theory of the state to the theory of the market. The original triad, it will be remembered, was "life, liberty and property." This, by implication, made the farmer of equal importance with a bushel of wheat; but the American version, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," left these frivolous matters on a plane by themselves, and left the compilers of the Constitution free to elevate property to so much higher a level that next year the Bill of Rights had to be appended as a compensatory afterthought.

The author of the "Letter," therefore, appreciating that Senator Borah and himself have tottered on the brink of Jeffersonian sentimentalism, returns to the tents of Hamilton, and discusses the revolutionary proposal to do something about anything from the Pippasian hypothesis that the economic gods are in the heavens and all's right with the farmer; or that if it isn't exactly all right, it will be sooner or later; or that if even that isn't so, corrective measures are profanely risky, the comparative security of Pippa's thesis being marked in the horrid fate of Prometheus.

Waiving, then, the question of the farmers' natural right to independence, the writer of the "Letter" proceeds to the assertion that the government can do nothing to insure economic equality between producers in various industries. The preference of workers for different occupations, he says, and the number of people involved, are the factors determining average compensation—thus explaining why makers of telescopic lenses earn so much more than ditch-diggers. He quotes a communication from an Ohio banker-farmer, who contends that in the last fourteen years taxes, improvement, equipment and labor have doubled in cost, while the

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farmers' purchasing power has steadily declined, and replies that up to 1914 the farmer was abnormally prosperous, that he is now paying for those halcyon days, and by way of consolation quotes Josh Billings and cites the collapse in the Florida boom and the recent slump in the stock market.

Indeed, so conclusive has he been in abandoning the farmer to the vicissitudes of the weather and the produce exchange that he feels it only kind to temper the wind to the shorn lamb. So he includes a section headed "Farm Situation Not Hopeless," a section which reminds one of the hoary adage about statistics. He mentions here that the price of cotton is 60 percent above the pre-war level, although in the section on "The Crops" he has stated that the outlook for this crop "at the moment is depressing," and that "not much time remains for recovery." Similarly he says in the role of comforter that "the wheat crop of the country last year was one of the largest ever grown," in the face of an earlier statement that this year's will be 100,000,000 bushels lower and 35,000,000 bushels lower than the five-year average.

As one nears the end of the discussion, a last hope seems to survive. It is held out by the heading "Assistance to Coöperative Associations"; but it is a false hope as far as assistance is concerned. Sympathetic interest, no doubt, "but we have the idea that they are more likely to be successful if they develop gradually and of their own strength than if they are promoted or the management taken in any degree out of their hands. . . . All that the government can do to collect and disseminate reliable information should be done." Only this and nothing more; just what has been done in the Coolidgian era of courageous and statesmanlike vetoing.

The reader may turn from this discussion to listen with added interest to the voice of the bank on the Political Campaign. The analysis of the farmers' plight is comparatively simple from a banker to bankers, even though a few bankers have their financial roots in the soil. But a broad utterance on national politics is complicated by the fact that the entrenched respectability from which bankers are recruited is politically divided. There is the South to consider. The voice at this juncture should say nothing, agreeably and tactfully.

It tries to; but it does not succeed, for it is no easy thing to say nothing deliberately and with forethought. It demands a long course of political or diplomatic experience. The section in the "Letter" remarks at the outset that the national conventions have been held, the candidates nominated, the platforms published, and that politics will be in the air for the next several months. . . . The author would have done well to stop at this point, so far having said nothing; but being safe and sane and with space to spare he feels that he can give effective vent to his safety and sanity by taking a swing at the "radicals." This element, he explains, "are always saying that there is no difference between the two leading parties, because the ideas on which the radicals place emphasis are unacceptable with either." "It is a common criticism of political platforms," he also notes, "that they deal in generalities." Yet, after brief comment on platforms and policies, he admits that all is safety and sanity on the political horizon: "In brief, there is no issue between the candidates that is likely to make a disturbance in business circles. Almost as much may be said of the platforms."

Thus in spite of himself he has said something: that party politics provide a diversion for the politically ambitious, and that this is a beneficent provision so long as business is not disturbed thereby. The two leading candidates for 1928 are both safe and sane. "It is quite possible that if they were to compare their personal views about the administration of the government and even upon public policies, free from party responsibilities, no great differences would develop between them, at least upon what are primarily business questions." Not being "free from party responsibilities," they must go through the solemn mummery of seeming to disagree, though no intelligent business man need be deceived.

Thus speaketh Crassus, while Cæsar and Pompey divert the populace. The striking feature of the "Letter" is that the banker, having developed a very neat and comfortable heaven for himself, thoroughly believes it when he sings with Pippa that God is there, too. But the farmer's heaven is a different one, and he is outside the gate.

In moments of rhetorical expansiveness, I allude to the acreage where I spend my summers as a farm. One of my privileges there is to talk matters like this over with my neighbor, Reuben Mason, a good farmer and a good Republican. Mr. Mason is something of a poet in feeling and when I offered him my opinions on this "Letter," he remarked meditatively:

"Thet's all right abaout Pippa's heaven, but thet man wrote somethin' else on the same subject."

"Yes?" said I.

"Yes," said he. "'A man's reach should exceed his gra-asp, or wut's a heaven for!'"

PERCY H. BOYNTON.

Washington Notes

THE really unique feature about this campaign is that for the first time since the Hayes-Tilden fight in 1876—more than fifty years ago—the really Southern states, the states of the far South, the so-called "solid South," have become interesting in a presidential campaign. Not only that, but for the first time in a good many years a doubt has arisen as to certain heretofore unshakably Republican states, such as, for example, Massachusetts. All of which means that the speculation as

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to the result this time will be wilder, the betting much more abnormal and the predictions far more weird than in any election that can now be recalled. Most of the old political mile-posts that have not already been swept away are shaky and twisted. It does look as if, unless the basic facts about this country are kept pretty firmly in mind, a lot of us are going to get pretty much bewildered before November. The reason, of course, is that there are in this campaign issues and undercurrents not present in any other.

Take, for example, the South. There is unquestionably a revolt against the Hon. Alfred E. Smith in Texas, in Alabama, Virginia, North Carolina and Florida—a revolt, too, of considerable size and strength. It is ostensibly based on the fact that he is wet. In reality it is because he is a Catholic. The wetness would not by itself cause a revolt. The wetness would not only be overlooked, but it would be to some extent welcomed, because after all, the Smith stand on prohibition is a reasonable and moderate one. He is not violent in his views, like the Hon. Bruce of Maryland, or the Hon. Wadsworth of New York. Publicly, prohibition is stressed, but privately, every Southern politician concedes that the trouble in the South about Smith is his religion, that the army of bigots are marching under the dry banner, that they are using the liquor issue as an excuse and nothing else. All this seems to be true, and the revolt is real enough to concentrate an unprecedented attention on these states. Further, there is certainly no doubt that some of our most eminent Southern statesmen are worried about their respective bailiwicks, not only on Al's account, but on their own.

However, in spite of the noise made by the ecclesiastical leaders of the Southern revolt, the loud claims of their followers, and the apprehensions voiced by the more responsible of the local leaders, I am convinced that any idea that Mr. Hoover will carry any one of the ten far Southern states is not well based. In the midst of the agitation about what these states will or will not do, which has already begun and which is bound to increase as the campaign progresses, the fundamental facts to remember are these:

First, that there is no real Republican party in these states.

Second, that it is vital to the organization leaders to hold them in line.

Third, that one majority is enough to give Smith their electoral vote.

Fourth, the fear that by going Republican they may open the door for a restoration of political privileges to the Negro is deep enough to overcome the prejudice against Smith. If it is not, then every real analyst of the Southern people is mistaken.

And a further pertinent and pregnant fact is that in all these states the election machinery is completely controlled by the Democratic organization.

Personally, I take no stock in any one of these Southern states breaking away from its Democratic moorings, though there is sufficient uncertainty to justify some of the most eminent members of the "Corps of Correspondents" descending upon that section with their analytical typewriters in hand and their Gridiron pins tastily fastened to their neckties or on the left lapel. Most of these gentlemen would just as soon appear on the street without their trousers as without their Gridiron pins. They plan to "cover" the South in September. I religiously follow their "stuff," and they will undoubtedly cloud my mind and make it more difficult for me to hold on to my basic facts. Nevertheless, as things now lie, I have not the smallest doubt concerning any Southern state's Democracy this time, save only North Carolina. I confess there is there a certain slight dubiousness, traceable altogether to the fact that Senator Furnifold F. Simmons, the aged but grim boss of that state, is totally unreconstructed so far as Smith is concerned. While Senator Simmons is a Democrat and will "support" the Democratic ticket, his hostility to Smith before the convention was too pronounced not to have seriously affected his organization, and he, himself, has no heart for a Smith fight, as he has shown by resigning from the Democratic National Committee.

To sum it up, I think that, despite the extraordinary condition in the South, the Hoover management will be extremely unwise to count upon any of these states, and even more unwise to spend any of their money in an effort to turn them. My information is that they will do neither. The Hon. Bascom Slemp, who knows the situation better than most, is not deceived into forgetting the basic facts, and he has, I am told, positively advised against the use of money in the South. "Use your money where it will do some good" is the gist of his advice.

So far as the Republicans are concerned, they are waiting for Herbert to sound his keynote in his speech of acceptance in California next week. Every few days for the past month, the newspapers have been full of forecasts of the Herbert speech. They have put him on various sides of various questions. Some have, for example, insisted one day that he would go the extreme limit on the dry side, reiterate his belief that prohibition is a noble experiment which must be constructively dealt with, and meet the Smith-Raskob challenge head on. Others have contended that, on the contrary, Herbert in his speech will be not so very dry at all, that in fact he will be slightly moist, to the point of indicating his belief that evils do exist under the Volstead Act and that despite his intention if President to uphold the Eighteenth Amendment and enforce the Volstead Act, so long as it remains law, it might not be a bad idea to make a survey and find a better solution.

I do not know what Herbert will say in his speech except that, even to my limited mentality, it is plain he will not attempt to compete with Smith for wet support, the only possible result of which would be to alienate the drys and open himself to a frontal attack as insincere. That is what the latter alternative would mean. I have not read any advance copies of his speech, nor have I been consulted as to its contents. I have not even been asked for suggestions, which makes me, I believe, unique among the writing men in Washington—puts me in a class by myself. However, and notwithstanding this singular oversight upon the part of Herbert, I do know some things about the speech. I know, for instance, that it will be exceed-

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ingly long. I know further, that it will be exceedingly heavy. I know, further, that it will be exceedingly unexciting. I know, further, that it will be ineptly phrased, and not well written. I know that it will be sound, but slightly podgy. I know that it has been written by Herbert himself, and no other. I know that no less than three splendid speeches were written for him by three perfectly splendid writers—or so they think. After reading them all Herbert threw them away and wrote his own. His will be duller than any one of the three and he knows it. The reason he gave was that while those other speeches were good—better than he could write—still they were not Hoover—they did not sound like Hoover—anybody would know they were not Hoover—and that if he was to get anywhere at all in this fight, Hoover had to be Hoover, and particularly at the start. That is all I know about this speech, but it is true, and it has not yet been published. The speech will be long and dull, but it will be Hoover—every line of it, and it will be honest. Take this incident as a whole, and while it may not have been very bright politics, it reflects more credit on Herbert personally than any that has occurred since Kansas City—or for quite a time before.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Thornton Wilder

NOW that Thornton Wilder has become both a best-seller and a Pulitzer prize-winner, he is in an unfortunate situation: on one hand, the literary columnists have accepted him as a Reputation and gossip about him with respect, but without intelligence; and on the other, the literary snobs have been driven by his tremendous popularity, by the obsequious gossips themselves, into assuming that there must be something meretricious about him. He remains, however, a remarkably interesting writer, with a good deal to be said about him which seems never yet to have been said.

In the first place, Thornton Wilder is the first American novelist who has been profoundly influenced by Proust. In all that I am going to say on this subject, I do not at all mean to imply a lack of originality on Wilder's part: on the contrary, it is quite extraordinary that the first books of so young a man should display such unmistakable originality of style, of form and of point of view. The influence seems simply the influence of a first-rate senior writer on a first-rate junior one. And what Wilder has learned from Proust is not merely Proust's complex impressionism: the side of Proust which Sacheverell Sitwell imitated in "All Summer in a Day" does not figure in Wilder at all. Wilder has listened to Proust's very heart, and his own has been timed to its beat. It is not a formula of style which he has taken, but a formula of emotion, of the criticism of life. And in order to consider Wilder properly, we should try to find out what part of his work represents the poet Wilder himself, from whom quite un-Proustian things may be expected, and what part is the mere repetition of the lesson of the master.

One of Proust's favorite formulas, then—which we find in almost every situation of "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu"—is that of agonizing, abject and desperate love on the part of a superior person for an inferior person, or at least on the part of a gentle person for a person who treats him cruelly. Thornton Wilder has leaned heavily on this formula. It is less prominent in "The Cabala" than in "The Bridge of San Luis Rey"; but the episode of Alix in the former, which seems to me also the episode which carries the least conviction, is simply a reversal of the Proustian situation, where it is usually a charming man who breaks his heart for an unworthy woman: the part played for Swann by Odette, for Saint Loup by Rachel and for Proust's hero by Albertine, is played by Blair for Alix. But there are other evidences of Proust, in a hundred turns of phrase; Wilder has even become addicted to a favorite expression of Proust's—a sort of proverbial phrase in French which I have never seen in English: he is always talking about somebody or other "making the fair weather" of somebody else (as Swann made *"la pluie et le beau temps"* of the Duchesse de Guermantes). And there is one passage in "The Cabala" where the Proustian note of hypochondriacal melancholy is brought almost to the point of burlesque: a Helen Darrell, a famous beauty, enters suddenly like one of those unannounced characters in Proust's social scenes. We are not told precisely what is wrong with her, but, like so many characters in Proust, she is ill and soon to die; none of her dearest friends dares to kiss her: they feel that she is blighted and doomed. "She was like a statue in solitude. She presuffered her death." Yet the unfortunate Alix envies her: "He would have loved me," she breathes in the hero's ear, "if I had looked like that. . . . She is beautiful. She is beautiful," he hears her mutter. "The world is hers. She will never have to suffer as I must." The dying beauty asks, before she goes, to be taken to say goodbye to a saintly old French poet, who is also about to die. "One wonders what they said to one another as she knelt beside his chair: as he said later, they loved one another because they were ill." I have cited this passage at length because it shows Wilder when he is writing pure Proust—it is one of the only scenes in Wilder, perhaps, of which this could be said and it is also one of the only scenes which I feel to be unsuccessful. Proust's characters are always ill, and Proust thinks that that is the most pathetic thing on earth—but Proust has the advantage of *"malade"* and *"maladie,"* words made for him, which he is able to drop with an irresistible somber mournful cadence—so that we do not resent his eternal invalids as much as we otherwise might. But "ill" in English has no such beauty: when you hear in English that somebody is ill, you ask at once what the doctor is doing for him.

In "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," the Proustian formula pervades the whole book. The Marquesa de Montemayor distils marvelous literature out of her insulted love for her daughter, just as Vinteuil in Proust distils marvelous music out of his insulted love for his. Furthermore, the Marquesa has evidently been transposed from Mme. de Sévigné, who plays herself such an important role in Proust. The bad feature here, however, is that Wilder has followed Proust in exaggerating the cruelty of the beloved to the lover. This is sometimes pretty hard to swallow in Proust himself, but then in Proust

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there is a savage bitterness which seems derived from hard experience; whereas with Wilder we feel that this violence is merely an effective dramatic trick. I cannot quite, for example, believe in the scene where Esteban is dressing Manuel's wound and Manuel repeatedly abuses him in the bitterest terms, and I cannot believe at all in the scene where La Périchole refuses, after twenty years, to allow Uncle Pio to address her by her first name. And it seems to me that there is something very forced about the pining of Captain Alvarados for his dead daughter: it is just one case of hopeless love too many. Also, Wilder slips all too easily into rewriting the death of Bergotte (a natural weakness, certainly: no doubt, like Strachey's death of Queen Victoria, it is destined to be rewritten many times): "We come from a world where we have known incredible standards of excellence, and we dimly remember beauties which we have not seized again, and we go back to that world." *("Toutes ces obligations qui n'ont pas leur sanction dans la vie présente semblent appartenir à un monde différent, fondé sur la bonté, le scrupule, le sacrifice, un monde entièrement différent de celui-ci, et dont nous sortons pour naître à cette terre, avant peut-être d'y retourner" . . .)*

This is not to say that Proust for Wilder has been anything other than the elder master who supplies every young writer with ideas before his own have fully come to growth. Since I have cited so many passages in which Wilder has filled in with Proust, I must quote at least one in the same key which Proust would never have written, which has a different ring of authenticity: "He regarded love as a sort of cruel malady through which the elect are required to pass in their late youth and from which they emerge, pale and wrung, but ready for the business of living. There were (he believed) a great repertory of errors mercifully impossible to human beings who had recovered from this illness. Unfortunately there remained to them a host of failings, but at least (from among many illustrations) they never mistook a protracted amiability for the whole conduct of life, they never again regarded any human being, from a prince to a servant, as a mechanical object."

And, in any case, the effect of Wilder is not at all like the effect of Proust, or like the effect of anyone we remember. Before we read him, we are likely to think that he is one of those contemporary writers who seem still to date from the nineties—that he is simply another "stylist," another devotee of "beauty"—that we shall, in fact, find him merely a pretty or a precious writer; but Wilder, when we come to read him, turns out to be something quite different. He certainly possesses that quality of "delightfulness" of which Saintsbury has said that Balzac didn't have it, but that Gérard de Nerval did. But he has a hardness, a sharpness, a precision, quite unlike our Cabells, our Dunsanys, our Van Vechtens and our George Moores. He has an edge which is peculiar to himself and which is never incompatible with a consummate felicity. This felicity, which seems natural to him, which has nothing of the deliberate pose, of the self-conscious effort to "write beautifully," of the professional beautiful writer, pervades his entire work and is felt as much in the conception of the characters and the development of the situations as in the sentences themselves. It is the felicity of a true poet—not merely the "style" of a modern literary man with a yearning for old unhappy fancy far-off things—and it makes possible for him many things which we should not have expected him to bring off. For example, Wilder has never been to Peru, and there are few things ordinarily more deadly than the dream-country of the twentieth-century novelist. But Wilder gives his Peru a solidity, an incandescence and a distinctness of outline, which we should never have thought possible. Take, for example, the Marquesa's pilgrimage to Cluxambuqua: "a tranquil town, slow-moving and slow-smiling; a city of crystal air, cold as the springs that fed its many fountains; a city of bells, soft and musical, and tuned to carry on with one another the happiest quarrels. If anything turned out for disappointment in the town of Cluxambuqua the grief was somehow assimilated by the overwhelming immanence of the Andes and by the weather of quiet joy that flowed in and about the side-streets. No sooner did the Marquesa see from a distance the white walls of this town perched on the knees of the highest peaks than her fingers ceased turning the beads and the busy prayers of her fright were cut short on her lips." Then the church, the hawks, the llama. . . It is all the city of a fairy-tale, of course; but it is a fairy-tale almost of the same quality as "Kubla Khan." It has its preciosity; but it is a preciosity at least as sound as "Vathek."

Wilder has also a form of his own, which is highly individual and which seems to me to promise more than he has hitherto brought it to accomplish. In "The Cabala," the several heroes of the several episodes seem at first to have in common merely the fact that they are all observed by the American who is telling the story; then, we learn that they are the ancient gods fallen on evil times, and we realize that there is also a significance in their relation to the young American. In "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," the different characters appear to have in common merely the fact that they were all killed by the fall of the bridge; then, we are finally made to understand that there was a significance in their having been killed, and that there is a significance in the relation of the people who fell with the bridge to the people who were left alive. "The Bridge of San Luis Rey" is more ingenious and more completely worked out than "The Cabala"; but I feel that it is incompletely satisfying. God works in too obvious a way: I cannot believe that Mr. Wilder believes in his God. The real higher power at work here is Mr. Wilder's esthetic form, which is struggling to incarnate itself: the God who broke the bridge is only a masquerading prophet. Wilder's real emotions and ideas have not yet fully come to the surface—they have not yet fully identified themselves with his peculiar style and form to bring forth his peculiar kind of beauty.

One should say something more about "The Cabala," which has received less attention than "The Bridge," but which seems to me, in some ways, more interesting. The circle of clever people in Rome turn out to be the gods grown old: Christianity and modern society have proved too much for them. The Puritanism of the young American gives Pan (or Priapus?) such a bad conscience that he is driven to suicide; and Aphrodite breaks her heart for an American Adonis who pays no attention to her. A bril-

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liant peasant Cardinal, who has spent his life as a missionary to China, robs Artemis—if, as I suppose, Astrée-Luce is an Artemis—of her religious faith. These are the gods of Europe contending with the influences of alien races. In the end, the young American goes to call on the Cardinal, whom he finds with "Appearance and Reality," Spengler, "The Golden Bough," "Ulysses," Proust and Freud on the table beside him. In the course of the conversation, the Cardinal shoves them to the ground: "Yes, I could write a book," he says, "better than this ordure that your age has offered us. But a Montaigne, a Machiavelli . . . a . . . a . . . Swift, I will never be." The moment after, just before the visitor goes, the Cardinal remarks that he would like for his birthday a small Chinese rug. The young American departs for the States: "Why was I not more reluctant at leaving Europe? How could I lie there repeating the Æneid and longing for the shelf of Manhattan?" The shade of Virgil appears to him. "Know, importunate barbarian," says the poet, "that I spent my whole lifetime under a great delusion—that Rome and the house of Augustus were eternal. Nothing is eternal save Heaven. Romes existed before Rome and when Rome will be a waste there will be Romes after her. Seek out some city that is young. The secret is to make a city, not to rest in it." . . . "The shimmering ghost faded before the stars, and the engines beneath me pounded eagerly towards the new world and the last and greatest of all cities."

Mr. Wilder himself, however, next turns up in Peru. I have already praised this fairy-tale Peru. I am told that it owes part of its vividness to its grasp and faithful representation of the Spanish character. Wilder's feeling for national temperaments—French, Italian and American—had already, in "The Cabala," appeared as one of his most striking gifts. But I wish, for our sakes at least, and perhaps for his own, that he would now take Virgil's advice and return for a time to New York. I wish that he would study the different nations which make up the United States, and give us *their* national portraits. Mr. Wilder already knows Europe, and he also knows the Orient; and we need him at home. I believe that this player on plaintive stops has more than one tune in his flute.

EDMUND WILSON.

Portrait of New York

(Done in a Delirium by a Faithful Reader of the Smart Magazines)

YOU'LL love New York, nurse. It is devastating no end. The Astaires are in it and they are a treat for these old eyes. With the Gershwin music, New York, it seems to me, is more than a little hot. I'll get there if I have to crash the gate. The latest racket is crashing the gate at the Gem Theater in Kemmerer, Wyo. The thing is done by going to the Gem early disguised as a charwoman. New York is big. I mean to say it gives me a sense of bigness, like Paul Whiteman. I knew Paul Whiteman when he rated only one orchestra and one chin. I know a lot of big people in New York. I knew the town when Lillian Russell was a good five-cent cigar and Roxy was directing a rehearsal of the personable ushers at the new Paramount Theater. Roxy is learning to be cute. Someone should tell him not to put that quaver in his voice. It is very trying. It is Mr. James Wallace who tells about a gentleman with an apartment in the East Forties who is very trying. This gentleman, who is also something of a wit, has a habit of collecting the electric signs at Times Square and sending them to a Junior League girl because she loves nice things. Another Chaplin, if only he would stop writing his own stuff. Most of it is bilge. If this fellow is a sound artist, then Dr. Coolidge is a ballet dancer. The fliers were greeted by Alice Foote MacDougall. Arriving late were Mayor Walker, Harpo Marx and John Roach Straton, the Baptist pope. The usual hooey. The supporting cast was adequate, but I, for one, am fearfully fed up on O'Neill. The rails were firm at $90 a case. And there is a speakeasy conducted by a gentleman with an apartment in the late Thirties, Willard, where you can get authentic Scotch, not a hiccough in a carload. It is very trying to these old nose and throat. Add wisecracks of 1928: Don't hit that bibliophile, it might be Gene Tunney. Marge Boothby in for lunch—again—on ham aspic with lettuce crotons, which Mr. Grover Whalen, bus-boy at the Algonquin, does very well, I think. And the *bon mots* there are devastating. Nize baby, ett upp all de ham aspic wid lettuce crotons. Then with Mr. Otto Kahn and a young man coming out of the Yale Club to the French Line pier to see Herbert and Flora Finney sail on the Cunarder Stavangerfjord for Paris, where Madame will select an effective ensemble in two tones for afternoon wear. Bon voyage ol' two-toner, say we. I'm like that sometimes. More than a little gay, that's me. I'm nonchalant no end, too. Be nonchalant. Light a Trillium. The Flower That Nobody Noses. The latest fox-trot is "Try to Understand Me," from "The Captive." Oh well, it takes all kinds of people to make a town like ours. Abed late, reading "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," written by a gentleman with an apartment in the West Seventies. The Astaires are in it and they are a treat for these old eyes.

GEORGE CECIL COWING.

Theory about "Talkies"

THE moving picture synchronized with sound has come upon us rather like the War. It had been talked about; each step of preparation had been announced; its Balkan stage was reached a few years ago in the imperfect projection of jazz-bands and Metropolitan stars—and suddenly it has arrived and found us almost entirely unprepared for it. The critics have been a gallant expeditionary force, feeling out the invader, and not stampeding; the industry—producers, directors, supervisors, and office boys—seems to have rushed headlong into the sea, as if possessed by a devil.

What follows is pure theory about the vocal movie—in the sense that I am imperfectly acquainted with it—but it is not all theory, because I do know something about the moving picture. On the eve of learning to know the new thing by experience, I am recording a few ideas and, no doubt, prejudices.

It seems to me that a distinction has to be made between

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the moving picture accompanied by appropriate sounds—"off-stage noises" on a rather grand scale—and the moving picture which uses speech as a fundamental element. About the former there can be little question. The roar of a motor car or of a crowd, the surge of the sea, the calls of birds have always been suggested in moving picture houses by appropriate music; in the big theaters, hoof-beats and certain other conventional noises have been realistically imitated. In good movies, sound has been suggested by movement as it should be; I have watched movies without musical accompaniment and not missed the sense of sound. Yet if in the news reel and scenic (the realism of the movies) the film carries its own accompaniment, there is a gain in verisimilitude and no loss that I can see. I count as news reel the Bernard Shaw subject—from the crunching of gravel to the last "good luck" it has little to do with the art of the movie. The value of this type depends entirely on perfection of mechanism and choice of subjects.

Does the composed, created movie need this new aid or lend itself to this exploitation? Or will the addition of the new device at all broaden the scope of the movie? We have been told so often that the movies cannot do this and cannot do that (this and that being usually the presentation of the drama of intellect and of psychological insight) *because* they lacked speech, that now we ought to welcome the chance. As I have never felt the movie suffering under these limitations, the novelty does not exactly entrance me. The movie could not do Oscar Wilde or Ibsen, but it could always create their cinematic counterparts; there was nothing lacking in the mechanism to make wit and soul alien subjects. What was lacking was imagination and intelligence in the directors, and this want was slowly being overcome. For the sake of argument, let us then say that the speech-mechanism enlarges the movie field.

At once we see where this leads—back to the stage, the drama, back to the association which began to corrupt the movies just as they were about to enjoy an independent existence. From this corruption the movies were recently escaping; perfection of the technique and the injection of German and American intelligence resulted in movies which were movies and nothing else. The talking device—as anyone may see by consulting announcements of new films—will mean to a great extent the filming of stage plays. (Trouble already has arisen concerning sale of movie rights to plays; the sales were made before the new movie was perfected and the question is whether the movie men may or may not make "talkies." The competition with the stage becomes intense.)

Against the talking-movie-drama I have an abiding prejudice. No matter how well it will do "The Importance of Being Earnest," I shall not be able to see why it should do it at all. It is a pretty well established principle that nothing should be attempted in one art which another can do equally well or better. So until talking-movies are composed specifically for the movies, I shall not care for the film drama. The fundamental reason is the one which made the filming of plays such a nuisance—that it diverts the movie from the exploitation of its own capacities, introduces alien elements, and hampers free development.

This suggests the next point of theory. The moving picture which uses speech as the stage uses it will have to develop a fresh technique—one in some respects hostile to the technique of cinematic expression. On the stage you have speech and gesture and grimace and action; in the movies you should have, above all, movement, a certain amount of mimicry taking the place of speech, among other things. You do not suit the action to the word, since there is no word. You suit the movement, which is your utterance, directly to the idea. The number of stage-directors who have been aware of the laws of gesture are few; they have not given us gesture on the beat of speech, but off it, ill-timed and ineffective. Now speech has to be transferred to the movie and its first conflict is with freedom of movement. The mechanics permit characters to move anywhere in a given area with presumably uninterrupted recording of voices—so that unlike the stage, we can have people moving up-stage, their backs to the audience, and yet hear them perfectly. But wherever the essence of the movie is pure movement, speech becomes an interruption. It becomes, in fact, merely spoken sub-titles, the characters immobilized, the rhythm broken as it was by subtitle or by close-ups.

This is where the talking movie needs a Hamlet to give advice to the players, and a Griffith to do as much for organizing its technique as D. W. Griffith did for the older devices of the movie. If the talking-movie can manage to talk without breaking continuity, it has a future, and it will not wholly ruin the moving picture.

Everybody is making the new type of picture, directors are falling over themselves to use the new inventions. It seems to me a dreadful commentary on their own limitations. A few days ago I asked King Vidor what he thought of the talking picture—he is bound to make one very shortly. Among other things he said that he had never missed speech as an element in what he was making. Naturally, since his pictures approach the perfect state of being purely cinematic. We wondered about Chaplin who had begun with extreme aversion to tonal additions and is now reputed dallying with the idea of a few "talking sequences" in his new picture. We asked each other first where in "The Circus" or "Shoulder Arms" or the rest of that great series of masterpieces, speech was wanting, where it would not be an intrusion. Where, in fact, in any good picture, could speech be used? As we spoke, Mr. Cecil de Mille was preparing a talking version of "The King of Kings."

Mr. Vidor was aware of the fact that he was facing a new set of problems, and hoped that in the first picture he made with sound he could find a subject which required a minimum of conversation and allowed a maximum of sounds and noises. ("The Crowd," incidentally, could have used noises perfectly, and required no dialogue—but the problem of having your voices and then dismissing them is a nice one.) So far as I can see, most directors are not conscious of the existence of the problem. They seem to think that you can add tone without changing the delicate equilibrium of the picture. It shows how little they know or care about the movies, and for them the speech-mechanism is a godsend, for it offers a novelty and again postpones the day when their feeble intelligence and atrophied imagination will be driven out of the movies.

GILBERT SELDES.

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Dude Ranch: III

The Trail Driver

HE HAS come out with some people from the North for a night here at the ranch, and ever since supper has been sitting out under the trees with them telling his experiences on the trails. Some of the other guests sit listening, too. I have not heard his name, but someone has been calling him Red, though he is sixty years old at least, if not more.

Looking at him you might think him the simplest and most open-hearted being in all God's world. He is a big man with broad shoulders and a thick head of hair. A heavy moustache hangs down over his mouth. His eyes are open and friendly. They carry innocence in them; from his whole face you would think him the innocentest little child, though, as a matter of fact, he has had his vices, as the cowboys have, however much their living in the free, wide air may have stamped on their faces the cleaner side of them. However hot or furious these vices, they are but moments in lives whose length has been spent on prairie and range; no signs of them remain.

This one-time cowboy is now a man of property in San Antonio, but has abandoned nothing of his old character. He is upstanding, candid; he lays his hand on a fellow's shoulder and says, "After you, sir," and "Naw, sir," and "Yes, sir," and gives you a blond, free look like a boy's. But for all that you would be mistaken if you should take him for so open and hearty a being. He is really a self-conscious old thing, all very well so long as you take him for what he likes to appear; but cross this ego of his, and he is as irascible and simple as a child and as vain as a tenor. In a big fine way he is a difficult piece.

However that may be, these visitors have got him to tell his stories tonight and sit listening, pleased at their successful entreaty—another illusion, they could hardly have stopped the reminiscences if they had wished to; I can see that Red is the sort of cow hero that will talk of his past for an hour and a half if you ask him, and if you do not ask him, he will talk of his past for an hour and a half anyway. But he does it very well; he has heard too many story-tellers around campfires on lonely trails and too much singing as the cowboys rode with the herd, he has read too many stories of the trails and seen too many moving pictures, he knows the tradition and the pattern of these tales too well, to perform very badly.

He was born in Kentucky, he says, and when he was three months old his father placed a buffalo hair pillow on the horn of his saddle, placed him thereon, mounted his horse, and was ready to migrate West with his family. Then he tells of his childhood days, of the robbers and thieves scattered over the country, five or six bands of them, and how they stole his ponies; and then of the Indians. The friendly Indians would sometimes follow the cowboys' outfit for days and torment them with their begging. Old Yellow Bear, the chief, came one day to the camp begging for bread, and when the cook, who had orders not to give him anything, refused, he stamped his foot right down in the dough the cook was kneading. The Indians at the Red Cloud Agency in Dakota did not bury their dead, but erected a scaffold eight or ten feet high; on this they put the body covered with a red blanket, on top of which were bows and arrows and a pot of food for the journey to the happy hunting-ground. All the animals that the deceased had owned were killed; he had seen as many as twelve dead horses and as many dead dogs at one scaffold. But that was nothing, he goes on, to the time when he was traveling the Chisholm Trail and saw ahead what they took to be a ridge of timber, but proved to be four hundred Comanches. They were on the war-path with another tribe and began killing the cowboys' beeves, twenty-five of them, which they skinned right there, eating the raw flesh, and with blood running down their faces, reminding him of hungry dogs.

He tells a capital yarn then of the time they were all in Mineapolis and a circus had also come to town; and the clown led his trick mule into the ring, offering anyone five dollars that could ride him, and one of the boys rode the mule into complete timidity, to the crowd's shouts, and so on till the police had to come and pull him off. And then another yarn of his first trip on a train, and how at Grand Island, when the train stopped for breakfast, a Negro waiter suddenly rounded the corner of the house beating a gong, which scared them so that he could scarcely hold one of the boys off from shooting the waiter —the cowboy swore he wouldn't let a damn nigger stampede him by beating a tin can.

He tells too of the first panther's scream he had ever heard, and how it stood his hair on end; of a flock of prairie chickens that came one night, so great that the noise of their leaving the roost next morning made the cattle stampede. "I am the chap who caught the blue mustang mare," he says, and tells how the wild mare eluded the traps and snares the cowboys set for her, until finally he and his sorrel roped her at a water-gap. The roping takes several minutes to narrate.

But the best story of all is the longest, and describes one time when he and Red Bird, his horse, were caught in the alkali desert, without water or food. There were deer and wolves and antelopes, but too far off to shoot. The second day came, his swollen tongue filled his mouth. And then about the middle of the afternoon he looked and saw a big lobo wolf a hundred yards away, and going his route. From time to time he looked back; the wolf was going his gait too and seemed to have him spotted. Every now and then he took a shot at the wolf, but both of them kept on going. At sundown the wolf was missing. The trail turned into a deep basin. He made his bed by the edge of the alkali lake and lay down on his stake rope so as not to lose his horse. The moon was just coming up. At about nine o'clock, the wolf's howls woke him up. Twenty feet away he saw the lobo between him and the moon. He turned over right easy, slipped his gun over the cantle of his saddle, and let him have one ball. The lobo never kicked. He grabbed his rope, went to the lobo, cut him open, and used his hands for a cup and drank his blood.

He goes on with the rest of that night, how he went down to the lake in the moonlight, washed up and went back to sleep, how he was awakened by a herd of elks,

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and how at last he met a friend who fed him water by teaspoonfuls till his tongue went down.

Next to me on the terrace is sitting a dry-looking little man and his wife, who is thin, Scotch and not easy to look at. She listens to the stories and turns her eyes toward me, as if to say that so long as it's a good lie it doesn't matter much who tells it.

Her husband catches that look in his wife's eye and leans over to speak low in my ear.

"I see my wife might persuade you wrongly, sir," he says. "These stories are true, fact is, I guarantee that. It's only that they belong to other people. I reckon most of them are in Marvin Hunter's 'Trail Drivers of Texas,' leastways the lobo story is—that was Samuel Houston's, I recollect, of San Antone."

The story-teller is going roundly on, speaking still of "those days when a man's word was as good as a gilt-edged note" and telling the visitors the cowboys' grace before meals——

Eat the meat and leave the skin;
Turn up your plate and let's begin.

STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Culture of the Prohibitionist

SIR: When I read your suggested plank on prohibition, I said: "I know what I have always felt in reading my delightful New Republic. It is not my culture." By which I mean that each civilization has its *urge* which it unconsciously works out. I work with great masses of American women (am chairman for a million and a quarter of them). I know their urge, common welfare, race-conservation, thus: "Health, education, good morals for *everybody*, with peace and prohibition finally triumphant. Down with the race-destroyers, lawlessness, moral laxity, poverty, opium, alcohol, lust, over-population, war!"

This is the pound in the breast of America. It is not the pound in the Mediterranean or Celtic breast. Tardieu says: "France has no public spirit. The United States is all public spirit." I do not say public spirit is the only culture, but it is the American urge, and it is a good urge. (The old Greeks had it, "sound mind in sound body.")

But it does not seem quite your urge; nor apparently Mr. Walter Lippmann's. (I speak open to correction.) You do not get the great health and humanity urge that is at the bottom of prohibition, the far vision.

I ask you, what is the urge that pounds in your breast and Mr. Lippmann's? What do you hope to accomplish for the United States by putting the big cities in control, Tammany and the Chicago gangster? What is the urge in the backers of Tammany that is so superior to the public welfare urge of the women of America? For myself, I question the morality shown recently by Tammany's child, Governor Alfred E. Smith, when, the Democratic Convention having rejected a wet platform, Mr. Smith cries: "Thank you, I accept and I will run on the very sort of wet platform the Convention rejected." Here, certainly, is a lower level of honor than that of ordinary business.

Le Bon (a Frenchman) practically likens the big city invasion to a barbarian invasion which the dominant outlying districts will put down. He distrusts thinking of crowds. Won't you tell us what is the culture-urge you see coming from putting the big cities on top?

E. H. TILTON.

Cambridge, Mass.

[In the letter of Mrs. Tilton, which we print above, our correspondent does not interpret correctly the "urge" which pounds in the breast of the New Republic. Her assumptions are wrong. We do not approve of Tammany Hall. In every municipal election since they became voters, the editors of the New Republic have, with practical unanimity, voted against Tammany. So far from being anxious to "put the big cities on top," we have always argued in favor of a proper balance between urban and rural interest and culture as the most important safeguard of a wholesome American commonwealth. We would like, no less than Mrs. Tilton, to contribute to public spirit, health, education, good morals, peace and temperance, but she is right in imputing to us a difference of attitude towards these goods. We are not as sure as she is that she and we know how to penetrate our own lives or the collective life of the American people with them. The chief distinction between the culture which she practises and the culture which we practise is associated with this lack of assurance on our part. Peace, education, good morals and temperance are words which correspond to certain human activities and ideals. These require, if they are to be made good, sufficient motivation in the lives both of the individual and society, and until they are methodically motivated it does not help very much to credit the people who seek them with enough mind to realize their admirable intentions.—THE EDITORS.]

Summer School—Reverse

SIR: It must occur to your sense of fairness that "Summer School" has another side quite as amusing as the one seen in caricature from the Registrar's office windows.

Under "Summer School—Reverse" why not note the Bursar's smug acceptance of tuition from these admittedly misguided hordes? Sure, they're seekers after knowledge, and will find it in proportion as they remember they're attending The Great Annual Clearance Sale. If they haven't entirely lost the cunning that made this summer's sojourn possible, they expect to find only here and there among many a wrinkled notion and much shopworn pedantry remnants of ideas worth taking home.

Some of them have tramped a long, long way—for what? Can't you smile at the grandiose, white-collared, dispensation of intellectual home brew over the bar of these do-little speak-easies? Doesn't this pensive pawing over of their own educational propaganda, spun by the ream in the university press rooms, remind you of the *Gott-mit-uns* air of self-absorption that wafted Moses up into Sinai while all Israel stood agape? And aren't you glad he returned from the heights with only ten stone tablets instead of what he might have brought had there been available materials as receptive as paper and fluid as ink? As it was, he hacked out enough advice to keep the whole Ten Tribes astray in the wilderness for years. The land of promise, a promised land while Moses lived, became reality only when he happily found himself on the farther side of Mount Nebo without sufficient rations to make the Israelitish camp. . . .

If, after six weeks of the big show, the grand dame fails of the impression she hoped to make on the minds of her little "500," forgive her. At least be as lenient with her as you will be with the educator acrobats and animal tamers back under the big top. It will reassure your big-heartedness to recall that her erstwhile entertainers have secluded themselves for another ten months' secret rehearsal of their next summer's performance. . . .

So has it always been with all people. The spenders, often the toilers, always pay to see the dervish dance and the crystal gazers gaze. On the same old human weaknesses the holy order of necromance continues to thrive and may be expected to as long as the uninitiate are willing and able to pay their fees.

And now, frankly, Editor, looking at which side of this summer school cartoon can the "little dog" best "laugh to see the sport"?

T. S. R.

Neversink, N. Y.

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Africa: Will It Be a Slum Continent?

The Native Problem in Africa, by Raymond Leslie Buell. New York: The Macmillan Company. Two vols. 2,146 pages. $15.

ALL persons know that my great sin is that I possess a good and fertile country." So wrote Moshesh, a great Basuto chief, and he put his finger unerringly on the motive behind the opening up of Africa, as the process of bringing Africa under the white man's rule is euphemistically called. The one and only motive detectable behind the incursions of Europeans into the country of the African natives is to make use, to their own ends, of the good and fertile land. The rights of the Africans, the welfare of the Africans, even the ultimate profit of the white man, have all been subordinated to immediate profit. Most of the "policies" followed by the whites in their activities have been dictated by the peculiar shortsightedness that prevents them from seeing beyond the ends of their noses. The major problems of Africa today all have to do, immediately or remotely, with ways and means of saving the life of the goose that lays the golden egg.

The Europeans, rationalizing their conduct, offer the following explanation for their presence in Africa: they are there for the good of the Africans. They are there in order that, by "contact" with a large body of whites (relatively speaking), the Africans may be able to absorb the benefits of European civilization more quickly than they would ever be able to learn them from scattered government officials and missionaries. There is a curious and amusing discrepancy between this fancy explanation for the presence of Europeans and the actual facts of African life today. And it is equally amusing to note that where there are most Europeans, that is precisely where the Africans are worst off.

Let us put the European penetration of Africa into summary form, remembering that the circumstances vary in each political division. The Europeans land. They bring with them a conviction of their own innate superiority. They immediately take land for their own needs, and they need plenty! In so doing they make no inquiry into native land laws and customs. They herd the natives off their "property." Then they set up plantations, or open mines or what not. In any case they need labor. They are the bosses. The natives are the labor. But they do not let wages fix themselves on a competitive basis. They arbitrarily fix the wages, and they fix them low. The native, whose economy is rooted in the soil which he has "sold," must earn a living, so he comes in to work. But he does so reluctantly. He must be persuaded. As long as he can eke out a living otherwise, he won't enter the employ of a white. So the whites lay taxes on him—hut taxes, for instance. To earn money to pay these taxes, the native comes to work. He and his fellows are herded together indiscriminately. Usually they are without women. When women are brought along they usually degenerate into prostitutes. Until conditions become horrible, there is little legislative control over the treatment of native employees. The natives acquire European civilization—liquor, syphilis, tuberculosis, and so on. They go plumb to hell. The labor supply dwindles. The Europeans shout that the labor supply is inadequate. The natives are lazy. They loll around at home. They would be better off working for the whites. So the government authorizes recruiting (severely regulated, of course!). But even Africans can't spawn indefinitely, and the bottom of the population bucket is reached. The structure of European enterprise becomes top-heavy. It can't be manned. The native population is demoralized. So the European philanthropists wonder how to get the native economy once more rooted to the land, where it was when their commercial cousins butted in. The philanthropists try to save the goose that has laid the golden egg.

Suppose you take these generalizations and check them against Mr. Buell's account of South Africa, Rhodesia, Gold Coast, Nigeria, Belgian Congo or Tanganyika. You will find that the discussion he gives of these districts (or any other region he reports on) varies from this schematic summary somewhat in proportion to the ability of the white man to endure the climate. Conditions in South Africa are very bad. Conditions in Nigeria are very good. On the whole, conditions on the East Coast (where there are plateau formations which enable the white man to endure the country) are worse than the conditions on the West Coast, where he can't, as a rule, live. I don't want to go further, however, without remarking that the Europeans do some things that can pass for paint and powder on the pock-marked face of Africa. They do something to educate the natives—but pitiably little. They teach them religion (Christianity)—whatever good that may do them, when the whole basis of their natural life is gone. The Europeans even go so far as to allow some of the Africans to help keep some of the other, and less lucky, Africans in order.

As I have said, conditions are good in Nigeria. They are also fairly good on the Gold Coast and in Zanzibar. They are bad in South Africa, and the problem of making them better is extremely baffling. There is a hidebound tradition of repression that comes from the period of Boer rule. Mr. Buell's account of the situation is admirable in its objectivity, but it lacks the force of Lord Olivier's indictment of South Africa, "The Anatomy of African Misery." Like Lord Olivier, Mr. Buell emphasizes the importance of Kenya in determining the future of East Africa generally. Kenya has a white population of 12,500. But there are 233 blacks for every white man. Kenya at the moment is a better country for the native than, say, South Africa. But the whites in Kenya want to get both feet firmly planted on the native neck, and they want to extend their program of repression to East Africa generally. They are ardent propagandists. The people of Kenya are hot against the Indians, too. The Indians have been in Africa longer than the whites. But the whites want them out, or entirely repressed. Next to the blacks, the Indians are the best victimized people in East Africa.

There are two ways of keeping the natives in order. The system of direct administration which imposes a European system of control on the blacks and destroys their tribal organization, and the indirect, which preserves the native tribal organization by incorporating it in the white system of government. The indirect system was first extensively developed in Northern Nigeria. It is being extended to Southern Nigeria. It is making a strong appeal to the French writers on colonial policy. But it is far from being the dominant type of control. For one reason, direct control has been so long established in most of Africa that it has destroyed tribal society. The natives are to a great extent detribalized. It is easier to destroy tribal organization than to restore one. It is the old story

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over again. The fools of commerce in their rush for profits have destroyed something which the angels of philanthropy cannot now replace.

The educating of a small number of the native *élite* and absorbing them into the administrative organization seems to do little good. The natives thus selected are naturally detribalized. They are trained in European ways of thinking. In the end, they are as far away from the uneducated natives as the whites. Nor is it any use to follow the French notion and try to make the educated natives into Frenchmen (or whatever kind of white you happen to be). It is interesting that, in spite of the fact that the French aim to assimilate the natives culturally, there are fewer natives in the administration of the French colonies than in that of the English.

In fact, the final conclusion one arrives at in considering the problem of the African native is that the muddle is well-nigh hopeless. I should say that the three things which will improve the condition of the natives are: (1) Getting them back on the land. This means the elimination of the plantation system, or at least its adaptation to native needs. (2) The general adoption (so far as feasible) of the system of indirect political control. (3) A concerted effort of the scientists to gain control of sleeping sickness, the chief native African disease, which is causing such appalling destruction. There is a fair prospect of controlling the European diseases that have been introduced. I do not think that it is wise or desirable to hope for the expulsion of the Europeans from Africa. Such an end would do Africa little good. What does need to be done, however, is to eliminate opportunity for Europeans to exploit the African black. As things are drifting today (as the people of Kenya ardently want to see them), Africa is in a fair way of becoming the slum continent of the world—a white aristocracy exploiting a black proletariat. I cannot see that the various ameliorative expedients now being adopted are doing or will do any good. Philanthropy is always the answer of bourgeois exploitive capitalism to the evils it brings in its train, and a poor, weak, unsatisfactory answer it is. In fact, the great problem of the African native today is the European problem. He has his choice: either he can combat the European exploiter, or he can passively become a terribly downtrodden proletarian.

The final section of Mr. Buell's monograph deals with Liberia. He tells the story of the Firestone concessions. He points out that apparently the United States government has cast its vote in favor of the plantation system, which has brought such dreadful evils in its train elsewhere in Africa. He shows that if the Firestone project is fully carried out, it will, like all other such projects, necessitate further direct or indirect pressure on the blacks in order to get the necessary labor supply. In brief, the Firestone project is one more step in the direction of a slum Africa.

These two volumes are undoubtedly the best source of information about the conditions among the natives south of the Sahara. The account is so full and objective that you can draw your own conclusions. The bibliographies are splendid. While students and scholars will be impressed and influenced by this report, I do not think the exploiting class actually on the ground in Africa will be influenced one bit. Once again the Tanganyika Times and all the other orthodox newspapers will complain about the "impracticality of textbook experts." Practicality is exploitation.

C. Hartley Grattan.

Pure Psychology at Last!

Psychology as Science, by H. P. Weld. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 297 pages. $2.50.

THE reader should be warned from the first that the book under review is not a textbook in psychology, but a somewhat pretentious attempt to examine critically the fundamental viewpoint and method of psychology as a scientific discipline. It is, in a sense, the bare argument of the Titchnerian brand of psychology which limits itself to "the description of sensory experience" and looks upon behavior as a part of biology.

The entire argument centers around the proper use of the term "scientific." And here the author sets out to champion the view that between pure and applied science —or what is called applied science—there is a great gulf fixed. Pure, critical, or existential science aims only at an adequate description of phenomena for their own sake. It can have nothing to do with explanation, prediction or values in any sense. It seeks only to formulate in a logical system the facts of observation stripped of all implications of meaning or other value predication. It must eschew practical ends, for these in no way concern pure science, and tend to defile it. Explanation, prediction, practical application, meaning and value belong to empirical or traditional science—what we all mean when we use the simple term science, but which really has no right to be called science at all—and traditional science is nothing more than codified common-sense facts of observation.

The application to psychology is obvious. In spite of this fact, the author trails his aura through nearly 300 pages with an amusingly sophomoric seriousness. His fundamental distinction between pure psychology and psychotechnology is utterly harmless, because it is so banal and commonplace. But is it not rather late in the day to be writing a book to prove that psychology as we know it is not really psychology? And why write a volume in support of a logical distinction which can have nothing to do with the program of a psychology that is too much alive to be bothered by such pedantry?

The logical outcome of the argument is that there are no psychologists, and that there is no science of psychology as yet. The study of behavior, or indeed, even of consciousness, with a view to ultimate prediction and control, falls short of pure psychology in deliberately attempting to deal with human problems as such. General psychology is tainted by its touch with life and belongs with the mental-test movement, educational psychology and applied psychology, outside the pale of science. So-called psychologists are deluding themselves—they are not really working at their trade, because they have not yet heard the gospel of purity! Perhaps, occasionally, one of them may turn up a fact which, when duly purged, may find a place in the rarefied conceptual schema of this new and virgin science of psychology. But, in general, psychologists are only technicians—that is, psycho-technologists—and belong with the plumbers and bricklayers under the American Federation of Labor. It is a wonder that pure scientists, or scientists of the pure, associate with them at all! Somehow we are not told whether Mr. Weld is a psychologist or a mere dabbler like the rest. Of course, there is nothing really new in this view of things; the very breezes that blow "far above Cayuga's waters" have borne the same message of hopelessness for more than a generation. Some of us had hoped that psychology, having secured a divorce from philosophy, would form a

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new matrimonial alliance with life and help bear the burden of social control—but should this alliance be permitted now that we know that only hyphenate and mongrel offspring could result?

C. J. WARDEN.

Wrong Reasons

Armed with Madness, by Mary Butts. New York: A. and C. Boni. $2.

MISS BUTTS, in her book of short stories, "Speed the Plough," showed such fresh qualities of style and imaginative approach, that it is disappointing to find her new novel off-key in every possible way. With oppressive seriousness, she has set characters acting in the wrong way for the wrong reasons. She would have one believe that her story concerns a group of remarkable young moderns, tired, poor, and elegant, of indeterminate sex, adepts in the art of torturing themselves and others, wretched in that state of sophistication where human passion is judged to be a kind of decoration, and human aberrations are considered *"chic."* A brother and sister, Scylla and Felix, "handsome and young, always together, and often visited by their friends," are master and mistress of an isolated house on the edge of "Hardy's country." Picus, really the oddest boy, "never up to any good," becomes Scylla's lover, to the chagrin of Clarence, his adorer. These young ones spend a great deal of their time either arranging or being taken in by what can only be described as mystical hoaxes, such as the amusing trick of pretending that the "Sanc-Grail" has been fished up out of a well on the point of a spear. Everyone, including a simple-minded American guest, is unaccountably horrified when this legendary chalice vanishes off a mantelpiece, and is later found on Picus. Clarence attempts to murder Scylla by tying her to an image of Picus and shooting at her arrows tipped with a gull's feathers, a far more exciting and *chic* method of attempted murder than an attack with a shot-gun or an axe. Felix goes off to Paris and returns with an indigent but, of course, elegant, Russian youth. At the close of the book, it is apparent that the tricks of these children are inexhaustible: that Boris will turn out to be another Picus, after all.

All this is presented in a style that leans hard on a bright modern metonymy, as tiresome as Victorian beadwork. Miss Butts writes with the conviction that every word must press sharply against her idea, although the idea be impaled in the process. She has heard of Stavrogin and Myshkin, divine fools, but has not been impressed by the fact that they come to life in a style as colorless as newspaper print. She has heard of primitive enthusiasm for the earth, and medieval enthusiasm for emotion. She has wished to write a novel, a feat which requires long breaths, and points at length connected by even the most devious and imaginary lines. Human slyness and passion cannot be clipped into small colored shapes and contemplated through a pin-point, nor novels built entirely of oblique flashes of imagery and clever guesses. Behind the variety of phrase and reference, these people who never laugh are seen, on close inspection, all to be acting exactly alike. They are not broken away. They are, evidently, no more nor less than the product of some excitement which never became completely detached from the imagination of Mary Butts.

LOUISE BOGAN.

This Economic World

This Economic World and How It May Be Improved, by Thomas Nixon Carver and Hugh W. Lester. Chicago: A. W. Shaw Company. 432 pages. $4.

WHEN an economist of high rank and a prominent lawyer join forces to write an account of contemporary economic life, we feel justified in the hope that they will have something important to say. We expect them to reveal the anatomy of social organization, to diagnose the sore spots, to make illuminating prognostications concerning the trend of things, and to suggest intelligent and helpful attitudes which may be adopted toward the insistent problems of the present. Above all, we expect them to be critical and scientific. And when, as in the book of Professor Carver and Mr. Lester, the product of such collaboration is a mere rationalized apology for things as they are, we feel justified again in a sincere disappointment.

Economic progress, to Messrs. Carver and Lester, consists in the Great Escape from Poverty. To this end, human beings of all ages have bent their bodies and minds and such facilitating instruments as they possessed. Modern capitalism is the latest phase of the process of Escape. All of it, broadly conceived, is "somehow good." There is a meliorative trend in economic affairs. To meddle with it is foolish—even dangerous.

The authors write in oracular vein. They employ the style of the profound thinker who speaks from the pinnacle of a great pyramid of knowledge. Yet what they say is less distinguished than the manner in which they say it. Many rather ponderous utterances in the book are trite or platitudinous or shallow. Fundamental scientific (or unscientific) positions are blandly adopted as self-evident postulates. Consider, for example, the several-times-repeated statement: "Of course, the principles of economics are universal. No country can monopolize any of them." Opinions which differ from the authors' own are dismissed by innuendo rather than by logic. Thus, instead of meeting the social theories of Sidney Webb, Philip Snowden, and Arthur Henderson, squarely and critically, the authors tell us that "they belong to the common, cheap, garden variety of socialists, and their economic policies do not differ essentially from those of Lenin."

The thesis of the book is in opposition to authoritarianism and in advocacy of economic liberty. The authors devote a considerable space to an exposition of their own brand of liberalism. Their position in this regard is more closely related to the negative doctrine of *laissez-faire* than to the positive, protected liberty which is sought by modern interventionists. It is a notion of liberty which would have been consistent with the conditions known by Adam Smith, but which probably would have seemed inadequate and antiquated to John Stuart Mill. The authors permit themselves the inconsistency of recommending the prohibition of alcoholic beverages and the restriction of immigration. They also appear to have overlooked a basic premise common to every variety of liberalism, *viz.*, that all the facts must be squarely faced and considered.

Reduced to its a b c, this account of the economic world appears to sum up approximately as follows:

(1) If every person will devote his best energies according to the best technique and with the aid of the best mechanical equipment to performing the task to which

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he is best suited, we will thereby secure a maximum output of goods and services.

(2) If every person will be fair and honest in his dealings with other persons, the distribution of wealth will be fair and honest.

(3) For these conditions to exist, people must be free—there must be no authoritarian pressure. If necessary, people must be forced to be free.

HORACE TAYLOR.

Arbitrary Individuals

The Process of Group Thinking, by Harrison S. Elliott. New York: Association Press. 229 pages. $3.

PERHAPS nothing is more revealing about American life than the fact that we live in collective units without possessing a corresponding theory or rationale of collectivism; that groups become more numerous and powerful and at the same time more anarchic, while individuals grow more arbitrary in proportion to the absorption of their functions by groups. When we were individualists in our daily lives, we waxed enthusiastic over a theory of collectivism, namely, democracy. Now that we are collectivists in actual behavior we demand intellectual and spiritual autonomy for ourselves as individuals. All of which may be summed up in the surprise of a recent visitor from Italy when he discovered that among the most popular books in the United States were to be found biographies of Bismarck, Napoleon, and Mussolini.

The terms "arbitrary" and "anarchic" are here used in a special sense. Arbitrary is used to designate a "feeling- or mood-prerogative" that is private and unaware of the "social medium" to which it responds and of which its behavior is a result. (In his paper entitled "The Autonomy of the 'I' from the Standpoint of Group Analysis," from which the above terms are quoted, Dr. Trigant Burrow furnishes an excellent interpretation of the conventional antinomy between the self and the group—and its consequences.) Lack of social awareness, then, produces autonomous, arbitrary individuals. But these same individuals who, like fish, swimming in the water of which they are unaware, but of which their behavior is a function, have their life and being in a social medium from which they attempt to isolate themselves almost to the same degree in which that medium rises in importance. Being unaware of the subtle qualities of this behavior which is social, these arbitrary individuals fail to recognize the possibilities of orderliness and method in group-processes. Their groups, in consequence, become anarchic, asymmetric, and in many cases negative to their purposes. Whenever anything needs to be done these days, we habitually say: "Let's organize an association or appoint a committee." And then we go on behaving as though the association or the committee did not exist. If anything of value emerges from our collective action, it is due, not to that "good of communion" of which Francis Bacon spoke with such fervor, but rather to the accident which allows some arbitrary individual to utilize the group as a symbol for his personal ends. Our groups, then, are anarchic in the sense that they possess no method for effective group-action.

"The Process of Group Thinking" is an empirical essay written for the purpose of indicating how individuals and groups may become more effective and at the same time less arbitrary and less anarchic. The book deals almost exclusively with method and experience. It is a "how" book, and fortunately it is written in such simple and direct language that the how-minded—as distinguished from the why-minded—readers will find difficulty in inventing excuses for not reading it. Professor Elliott has lived in the medium of group-discussion, has, in fact, been one of the nuclei of its life in this country. He has taken the new pedagogy seriously, so seriously that he has ceased to lecture about it and has set to work experimenting. For more than a decade he has, in his academic classes and with heterogeneous groups in all sections of the land, attempted to demonstrate the distinction between the pedagogy of Herbart and of Dewey. His book tells what happened in these experiments. He has garnered the fruits of a long and valid experience, and as many of his friends have long wished, he has now presented these to the public in organized, usable form. The essay, it should be said, is not without its faults. There is, for example, the recurrence of a somewhat naïve conception of democracy as an end-value; there are numerous infelicities and inept expressions; and there is the constant high-note of pressure, as though the writer felt the necessity of pushing against something which he knew was there, but which no one else sees. This latter fault, if it be a fault in this sort of writing, sets too high a pitch for the ordinary reader, and is tiring even to those who are familiar with the subject-matter. But this is not a book to be read at one sitting; it is, rather, a book to be read a little, assimilated and experimented with a little—and then read again.

The thesis that we must live and act in and through groups is realistic; its fits the facts of modern life. If, then, we are to be objective about life, is it not a logical procedure to find out how these groups may do their work most effectively? Is this not the obligation which the scientific way dictates? Group-action without valid method can in the end lead only to new forms of individual dominance—and these, in the end, can only lead to new forms of group-action. Somewhere the circle of darkness needs to be broken, and if the past history of science is to guide us, we may profitably look to method as the light which will differentiate order from chaos. Those who despair of any group-formula which will be educative for all participants and at the same time progressive for society as a whole fall into two common errors: they either see life in black-and-white terms and are hence absolutists, or they misinterpret the functions for which groups are appropriate mechanisms. The absolutists are easily explained, and probably receive more explanation than their position warrants; those who dismiss social-methodology, however, on the ground that "a group is never capable of giving orders, not even for luncheon" deserve consideration. These latter often point to discussion-groups which have failed; for the most part, it will be found upon investigation that these were groups in which there existed no common interest-motivation, not even a lively interest in learning. A miscellaneous collection of individuals is not, indeed, a group, and such a collection lacking interest-coherence is as incapable of giving orders as an unintegrated individual. Now it goes without saying that an artificial group which has nothing impelling to do as a group should not use discussion-method; it were far better for such a group to have its unreal unity symbolized by a professional lecturer, who can serve the same function for any number of factitious groups.

We need, if we are to get on together in a world of less and less privacy, a social logic which will test our in-

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terests, challenge our individual ends, and give some semblance of truth to the multiplying fruits of our human interrelationships. A finer awareness of the self accompanied by a finer awareness of other selves, and finally a finer awareness of the ensuing products of these two forms of awareness—all of these are parts of the educational enterprise of the modern who aims to live in a social medium of integrating selves reaching toward higher levels of equilibrium and order. (The above is not to be taken as a denial of the values of a certain robust kind of egoism. "The inner life pursues its life in silence," and therefore is too easily denied. Awareness includes relations between the so-called "inner" and "outer," and there can be no true integration which remains wholly objective and external.) Whence is this logic to come? Professor Elliott does a useful service in showing the way by contrasting the methods of learning as proposed by Herbart in the early nineteenth century and by Dewey in the early twentieth:

Herbart's Five Steps of Learning:	*Dewey's Five Steps of Learning:*
1. Preparation.	1. A felt difficulty.
2. Presentation.	2. Its location and definition.
3. Comparison.	3. Suggestion of possible solutions.
4. Generalization.	4. Development by reasoning of the bearings of the suggestions.
5. Application.	5. Further observation and experiment leading to its acceptance or rejection.

In this presentation one sees at once that Herbart's formal logic is the method of individual learning or teaching. A different atmosphere pervades the experimental sequence in Dewey's outline; here one recognizes at once is a method which may be used by groups as well as by individuals; it begins with a difficulty, a problem, a situation and not with some generalized desire to accumulate knowledge. Herbart's method is still valid for those who have lectures to prepare and no immediate or fresh problems to solve. But assume, for example, that a group of individuals should all prepare themselves in the Herbartian way and then come together to discuss their newly acquired knowledge. What could such a group discuss? Rather, why should it discuss anything? On the other hand, assume that there are a number of individuals who face the same difficulty, live in the same situation, and are compelled somehow to arrive at a common conclusion regarding a specific issue. No amount of Herbartian preparation will solve the problem for this group, since this is a social situation in which the primary factors are interests, desires, wishes, prejudices, repressions, etc. In other words, social situations call for a social logic and method.

Professor Elliott's book is an elaboration of these two assumptions, namely, that we need to learn how to behave creatively in groups, and that there is an experimental method by which this may be achieved. If he appears to claim too much for the method, this may be accounted for by reason of the fact that he has won unusual distinction as a successful demonstrator of his thesis. He experimented for fifteen years before he wrote his book. In other words, it costs considerable in effort and concentration to learn to live in a world of shared experience and joint learning. It is much easier and far simpler to continue living arbitrarily in an anarchic world—and far deadlier.

E. C. Lindeman.

Far Away and Long Ago

The Death of Society, by Romer Wilson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

Tambo, by James Jenkins. New York: McBride. $2.

Black Sparta, by Naomi Mitchison. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

The Door Unlatched, by Marie Cher. New York: Minton, Balch. $2.

THE romantic novel, in spite of all temptation to go realist, remains romantic. Here are some various examples of its steadfastness.

The hero of "The Death of Society" is, extraordinarily, an Englishman named Smith. But this is merely a flimsy disguise. He gives off the unmistakable aura of one who has absorbed the works of Matthew Arnold; he would look more himself in side-burns; and his name a generation ago would certainly have been Vere de Vere. We are told that he is a man of maturity, and of experience that includes the War and a European education; we meet him now riding horseback through the Swedish countryside, calmly happy, sure of himself, ready for anything. He stumbles on the house of Ingman, a retired philosopher, who, with his beautiful young wife Rosa and their two daughters, leads an idyllic and unexciting life of seclusion. After he has stayed with them for only a day or so, one of the daughters has fallen in love with the Englishman; but he, after his first sight of Ingman's wife, has eyes for no one else. In this peculiar atmosphere of liberal philosophy, he makes no attempt to hide his feelings, and the wife soon returns them. Old Ingman lets them have one day together alone, and then Smith must be on his way. Rosa Ingman, we are told, is one of those superwomen who might not seem quite so all-wise if they were not so breath-taking to look at. This beauty the author has feelingly conveyed; but when we are told, in the introduction by Mr. Hugh Walpole, that the story itself is beautiful, we must qualify. It is a beautiful case of emotional debauch; but, especially in retrospect, a debauch is not very pretty to consider.

Mr. Jenkins, in "Tambo," keeps emotion almost entirely impersonal. The book is an impressionistic account of a journey from Lima to Moyobamba, across the Andes. The romantic element in his story is not in the feelings or the words of the characters who appear in it, but only in the scenery he describes: the streets of Lima, the Andes trails, the Indian huts. The author handles words roughly, and not always without damaging them, but the whole effect is of strong and vivid color.

> As he stepped out of the car, he heard from the corner canteen a wiry skeleton shiver, a whang. Mechanical jaws clamped over a laxative coin, and the bawdy piano loosened its bowels of an American tune that flooded the street.

Of all the drugs (harmless, we may piously hope) with which novels soothe a reader's trance, none can overmatch the exotic perfume of a good story of ancient days. Besides the usual pleasantly drowned sensation in which our consciousness merges with the hero's, an historical novel gives us the additional and specious feeling that we are improving our minds, learning history. We are apt to receive a stronger impression from a novel about Cæsar, for instance, than we are from reading the standard history of his times. And we are thus more at the mercy of the historical novelist, who may give us a picture as totally

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wrong in emphasis as the historian's is lacking in any. In "Black Sparta," a collection of stories about the Greece of Pindar, Aspasia and Agesilaus, we are struck at once with the air of absolute fidelity to historical fact, and the confident ease, with which the author moves among these reconstructed ruins. It delights us like a display of parlor magic. But after reading half a dozen of these stories, we become aware that, although the costumes and the setting may be unexceptionably right, the people themselves are nothing but hearty English men and women, dressed up. From time to time we are struck by some pose of thought or action whose flavor seems really antique and strange; but too often we are watching a fancy dress party in which the guests' only distinction is conferred by their clothes. We are reminded of Kipling and his reconstructions of what he imagines foreigners to be like; they resemble the crude and violent crayon drawings of a child or a savage. Perhaps there is something essentially provincial in the English imagination.

In "The Door Unlatched," a young American archeologist, living in Paris, and in poor health, fills in his time by tutoring the daughter of a pretty American widow, while he tries to bring himself to attack his own work. After one particularly sleepless night, he gets up to look out of the window, closes his eyes for an instant, and on opening them finds that he is looking at a different, a much older Paris—the Paris of the Terror. The experience lasts only a moment, but the fascination of this sudden lift back into the past makes him feverishly eager to repeat it. In spite of all his efforts, the visitations come accidentally, but with increasing intensity, and gradually he lives more for them than for his waking life. The figures of the girl and her mother are his intimate companions in these visions; and in an attempt to bring together the sundered halves of his life, and in increasing terror at the force that is mastering him, he makes love to the mother, and succeeds in making her fall in love with him. They go on a honeymoon to Italy; but the attempt is unsuccessful, and they separate. He sees the mother and daughter once again in Paris before the inevitable end. This is a first novel, and an extraordinarily good one.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

"The Seventh Hill"

The Seventh Hill, by Robert Hillyer. New York: Viking Press. 85 pages. $1.50.

ON the dust cover of this volume of verses, the publishers have reprinted a statement that J. Middleton Murry once made about the author, an American resident in England: "Nothing in his subject-matter suggests his country of origin." This sentence, intended—I believe—as a compliment, is, in effect, a sober diagnosis of Mr. Hillyer's verse, rootless stuff, elegant and sometimes melancholy. This writer is no expatriate, residing abroad for reasons economic or social, and retaining fierce interest and partisanship in his own land; nor is he an immigrant who, forsaking the land of his birth, has become the citizen of another: he is a man without a country.

This statement, of course, has no political intention: I mean that Mr. Hillyer's verses have no connection with life, that they are polite and literary: snobbish in the way that everything derivative and spiritually imitative must be snobbish. At least one of them, concerned with "vulgar people" who "love to stare in someone else's yard," is almost offensive; but nearly all the rest are harmlessly concerned with castles, lutes, temples of Zeus, "faring through the wood," and medievalish religions experiences.

Now it is, of course, possible—not likely, but quite possible—that a contemporary should write honestly and passionately of this sort of thing. It is not possible that he should write of nothing else: that his significant experience should be all in fancy; and his viewpoint untouched for hate or love by the life that moves about him. Yet here is a poet who has traveled from New York to London, who writes more than once of the sea, and to whom a ship is *only* a "golden boat," who sees a harbor *only* as "mountains of twilight." And, anxious to protect even that which he loves from the rough world, he prays—without any startling newness of phrase—that a sleeping castle may

> yet lie in slumber
> another thousand years.

Mr. Hillyer's versification, always formal, is generally correct. "Ear" rhymes with "clear"; "thing" with "string"; and "day" with "clay" and "sway." So, careful, is the scansion: though, to be sure, the poet's anxious counting of feet betrays him into gravely confiding to us that he

> took one deep breath *of the air,*

and discovering with every indication of interest and surprise that he is

> no geometrical design.

But if the verse is technically correct, it is never bold or original. There is not a single phrase in which new meaning is uncovered: not a line that enriches experience. Form comes, not out of any deep need in the material nor because of an ever-fresh poetical discovery, but because Mr. Hillyer knows what an *iamb* is and what a *quatrain;* he is aware that a sonnet has fourteen lines of stated length and pattern of rhyme—which is sufficiently correct. He also believes that when one has arranged the fourteen lines according to the formula, or has set down his *iambs* in rhymed sets of four or five, poetry results: and this is wrong.

Mr. Hillyer correctly drives his Pegasus, a wingless beast, but neatly docked and curried, who wears his check rein just as if he needed it.

M. P. LEVY.

Contributors

STUART CHASE, a member of the Labor Bureau of New York, is the author of the "Tragedy of Waste" and "Your Money's Worth."

PERCY H. BOYNTON is professor of English at the University of Chicago and is the author of "Some Contemporary Americans" and "More Contemporary Americans."

GEORGE CECIL COWING is on the staff of the Star-News, Pasadena, California.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN has written on literature and politics for The American Mercury, The Nation, and other periodicals.

C. J. WARDEN, Ph. D., is the author of "A Short Outline of Comparative Psychology."

LOUISE BOGAN is the author of a book of poems, "Body of This Death."

HORACE TAYLOR is assistant professor of Economics at Columbia University. His "Making Goods and Making Money" will be published by Macmillan in the fall.

M. P. LEVY is the author of "Matrix" and "Wedding."

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